The PULPIT

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JANUARY 1945

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Sermon Illustrations

Contributed by Readers of **THE PULPIT**

'Three Minutes After Twelve'

Much has been said of the title of Adolph Keller's book, *Five Minutes to Twelve.* That book was written a few years ago, at the close of an era. Today I received some church literature, the theme of which was, "For Such an Hour as This." On the front page was the picture of a clock with the hands pointing at three minutes *after* twelve! That clock tells a story we need to learn: We have passed the midnight hour; it is still dark, but during the past few years we have entered a new day. Our job, by the grace of God, is not so much to save an old order, but to help shape a new. "The first things are passed away—behold, I make all things new." —*Eugene K. Nelson, First Lutheran Church, Algona, Iowa.*

How the Bible Transforms

A Chinese friend of mine had this remarkable experience when for the first time he read the teachings of Jesus in the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of the Gospel of Matthew. This is his own report: "I can never again look at a person as I looked at him before, whether he be my servant, rickshaw coolie, a foreigner, a stranger, or even a Japanese who is attacking my country. I cannot but see the sacredness in every one of them—the tie that makes them my brothers."—*Emory W. Luccock, First Presbyterian Church, Evanston, Ill.*

A Warning to the Church

The church has a primary duty to deal with the problems of man's individual and collective life to the end that civic righteousness shall be attained. The failure to do so is an omission so grave that as thoughtful a person as Pierre Van Paassen attributes our present disaster to it. Writing in *The Forgotten Ally,* he says:

"The disaster did not come overnight. It was preceded by many warnings and portents. It did not start with the march on Rome, with the invasion of Manchuria, or with the Reichstag fire. It started at that point in history when Christianity with its faith and love withdrew from the world and created itself a personal sphere, a sacrosanct retreat by confining the operation of Christian virtues to private circumstances and affairs. . . .

"If we fail to apply the divine truth to concrete historical circumstances, in the reconstruction of society, in the building of a new order, we leave the road wide open to the Devil's powers. To keep the truth hovering in the abstract will lead to a passive acceptance of all manner of evil conditions and in the end to a concordat with the Devil himself, who is quite willing to accept our churchly formulas, liturgical sonorities and pietistic speculations about the inner life and the life hereafter, as long as he is left to rule the present. Today is what counts."—*Harry B. Taylor, First Presbyterian Church, Syracuse, N. Y.*

Emerson Speaks to Today

The time is ripe for the Christian church to proclaim with an urgency born of desperation the fact of God and the moral law without which any seeming reconstruction of civilization will prove to be sheer deception. H. G. Wells expressed the basic conviction that "Religion is the first thing and the last thing. Until a man finds God and has been found by him, he begins at no beginning and works to no end." And Emerson, in his essay on Napoleon in *Representative Men,* was speaking to our own day, as he was speaking to his own. Hear his timely message:

"He (Napoleon) did all that in him lay to live and thrive without moral principle. It was the nature of things, the eternal law of man and of the world, which balked and ruined him; and the result, in millions of experiments, will be the same. Every experiment, by multitudes or individuals, that has a sensual or selfish aim, will fail. . . . As long as our civilization is essentially one of property, of fences, of exclusiveness, it will be mocked by delusions. Our riches will leave us sick; there will be bitterness in our laughter, and our wine will burn our mouth."—*J. Marvin Davis, Federated Church, Ajo, Ariz.*

The Checkbook Knows!

Philip Guedella, writing the biography of the Duke of Wellington, said the most difficult matter was not in finding out what Wellington did, but in discovering the sort of man he really was. The most dependable evidence he found was in the Duke's checkbooks covering several years. Here was trustworthy evidence of what the man cared for most.

Did you ever study your checkbook critically and see how you spend most of your money? For what are you exchanging your life? How much of the tangible—and the intangible—is tied up in your checkbook? Joseph May said: "Life was not given us to be all used up in the pursuit of what we must leave behind when we die."—*A. C. Brooks, Third Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.*

Conquest by Example

In Dr. A. J. Cronin's book, *The Keys of the Kingdom,* Father Chisholm, the missionary priest, is portrayed as anxious to win the Chinese people of his parish to Christianity—but he was not too anxious. Mr. Chia was a man of wealth but even the healing of his son at the hand of the priest failed to convince him that Christianity was better than the old religions of China. But after many years he finally came to the priest and confessed: "My friend, I have often said: 'There are many religions and each has its gate to heaven.' Now it would appear that I have the extraordinary desire to enter by your gate." The priest replied: "I cannot believe that you are serious," which led Mr. Chia to explain: "Once, many years ago, when you cured my son, I was not serious. But then I was unaware of the nature of your life—of its patience, kindness and courage. The goodness of a religion is best judged by the goodness of its adherents. My friend, you have conquered me by example."—*Dewey R. Eder, First Evangelical Church, Naperville, Ill.*

The Up-to-Date Bible

In an address at the dedication of the American Bible Society's new building a few years ago, the late William Lyon Phelps said:

"The Bible is by far the greatest work of literature that the world has ever seen. There can be no doubt about that. While Shakespeare is the greatest of all writers outside the Bible, the Bible is superior to Shakespeare, from a merely literary point of view; so superior to Shakespeare in beauty and splendor of poetry, richness of prose, in knowledge of human nature, that there is no comparison at all. That is generally believed today by all types of people, whether they are hostile to religion or not. Why, the Book of Proverbs is more up-to-date than this morning's newspaper."

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The Pulpit

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, *Editor*

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'So Little Time'

BY J. H. MARION, JR.

So teach us to number our days that we may apply r hearts unto wisdom. Psalm 90:12.

ONE OF the chief irritations of life for many of us is that we are compelled to be forever running a ce against the clock or the calendar. To do this job, accomplish that purpose, to win this game or that victory, we have just so much time, and no more. Then the clock strikes, the whistle blows, the curtain falls, and life writes over that chapter the word "finished" and takes it out of our hands.

Getting back from the scene of a sensational crime one night just before his paper went to press, a young reporter covering his first big assignment for a famous journal sat down to write his story so excited that e could hardly find the keys of his typewriter. Seeing is predicament a seasoned old veteran of the staff came ver, laid his hand on the boy's shoulder, and said: Take your time, son. You've got two minutes!" Two inutes to write the biggest story of his life! Two inutes to think what to say and how to say it, and hen to say it. Two minutes in which to seize a great pportunity, or to miss it! Well, that is what life eems to be forever saying to us all—saying it calmly et maddeningly often—concerning the acquisition of nany of the best things in life. The prize is there, all ight—exciting, shining, beckoning—but if you want it, ife says, take it before the clock strikes next or you nany never be able to take it at all.

It is the awareness of that truth that runs like a haunting motif, a recurring chord in music in a great symphony, through one of the recent books of our day. The book is J. P. Marquand's novel, *So Little Time*. The story is about a man, a playwright in middle life, who is eager to get the most out of living, both for himself and his family. But he is oppressed all the way through by the shortness of life and the imminence and pressure of death. He wants to write a great play, but, beset as he is by many burdens and responsibilities, there seems to be "so little time." When his son Jim puts on a uniform and goes to war, he realizes again that life for Jim may be limited and so he speaks and acts in a way to insure Jim's happiness in the little time that may be left to him. "So little time—so little time!" —that is his lament all the way through, and while to many of us his pre-occupation with the passing of time may seem too somber and too morbid, those three words of his that form the title of the book might well be brought now and then to the center of our attention and, in relation to life's supreme spiritual decisions, pondered afresh by us all.

In particular, and rather paradoxically, they are words that demand attention above all by those of us who appear on the surface to have plenty of time. I mean by that, of course, the young people among us: all those, indeed, who stand fairly well toward the beginning of life.

Go back for a moment to a scene beside the Sea of Galilee years ago. Simon Peter is there with his Master, and Jesus says: "When you were young, Peter, you girded yourself and went wherever you wanted; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hand for someone else to gird you, and you will be taken where you have no wish to go." Whatever else the Master may have meant by that observation, he was saying there that our younger years—our years of youth—are our days of critical decision. In this elastic and plastic period we can choose as we can never choose again. Within that span—that valley of decision—some goal lines must be crossed or they may never be crossed, some fine chapters written or they will never be written, some great spiritual matters settled then, once and for all, or they may never be settled aright.

I

The importance of that valley of decision, the awful urgency of its choices for God or against him, lies for one thing in the fact that our tomorrows are the sons and daughters of our todays, our maturer years the blood descendants of our days of youth. We sometimes hear one speak of the years between fifteen and thirty or forty as though what a person does in that period did not greatly matter. That span is pictured as a kind of prologue to life, as though the story did not really get under way until page 90 or 95, along about chapter ten or eleven.

But the story, as a matter of fact, is in full swing long before that. Life is like a piece of music. I am not musical except on the receiving end of music, but I am told that the way you start writing a piece of music determines the sequence of it. You sit down to compose a tune. "You can strike any key you choose; but having struck one," says a man who knows music, "the next key will necessarily bear some relation to the first, and by the time you have struck half a dozen you will have settled the key to which you must conform under penalty of violating the natural laws of harmony." Music, that is to say, is mathematical, and "the final chord is predestined when the first chord is sounded, however the melody may flow between."

It is a fact, moreover, that is no less true of life than

of music. Though the melody flowing between may often deceive us, the first and final chords of life are closely knit together, and many are the spiritual and psychological bonds that bind them one to the other. Said Lincoln, "We cannot escape history," and no man ever escaped his own private history. No man's past ever completely ceases to mold him. A Madame Curie's great discovery at forty is the upshot partly of her devotion at twenty. What triumphs or tragedies await us tomorrow already are being shaped by the trend of our life this morning: today's activities telling upon tomorrow's achievements, and our current decisions fashioning tomorrow's ideals.

Plenty of time left to live, perhaps—but so little time to decide! A college boy, say, is free enough now to study in a variety of ways. He can play at this thing of education, or he can work at it. But, using his freedom now to play at it, let's say, the question is, How free will he be to make life later on what his wider world and dawning insights may impel him to make it? A young person is free enough now to shape his life by the insights and ideals of Christ, free to make his body serve his mind and heart, or free to make mind and spirit the servants of his body. But, using that comparative freedom now to pamper and exalt his body over everything else about him, the question is, How free will he be later on to win those prizes that come only to the men and women of rightly disciplined minds and bodies? "Take your time," Life may seem to say, "you've got five or ten years to decide." Five or ten years? Two minutes!

II

A second reason for the critical importance of this valley of decision in which we have "so little time" is this: that in those years we cannot refuse to make some kind of choice; we can't postpone some kind of decision, for Christ or against him. Succeed as we may in refusing to make up our minds about many great matters, we cannot keep from making up our lives. A man's life gets made up one way or another whether he makes up his mind or not.

One mark of Napoleon's genius, we are told, was his ability to make swift decisions. But there came a time, one day, when this power of Napoleon's went into eclipse. After winning in 1813 a brilliant victory at Dresden he was pushing on triumphantly; and then suddenly he was gripped by a paralyzing sense of indecision. Which way should he go? He wasn't sure. He hesitated. He stopped. He waited. For two days he couldn't make up his mind. But during those days, the record plainly shows, circumstances made up his life. Like a man in a canoe drifting down a river and debating whether he will stop at a certain point and while he debates is carried past that point, so Napoleon found that while he debated life had decided for him, and decided wrongly. The fruits of previous victories were taken from him because keeping his mind in suspense was not enough to keep his life in suspense.

So one wonders if many people today who are falling into moral and religious indifference and indecision are quite as neutral as they often think. "What will you do with Christ and his way of life?" comes the question to every man and woman of us; and you know how multitudes of us respond to it. Maybe Christ is what he claims to be, we say; perhaps his way is *the* way of life—but we are not sure. So we take Christianity under advisement, as it were. We read articles and books about it. We discuss it with our friends. Now and then we go to church or to a summer conference to give it a polite and interested hearing. And then, perhaps, we discuss it some more. But let no one suppose that such indecision is spiritual neutrality and nothing but that. It is not neutrality. Every day life has to be lived one way or the other, and keeping our judgment on the fence does not mean that we can keep our actions, our moral influence, on the fence. Life has to be lived; it does get lived, and not to commit heart and life to the faith and way of Christ is to live life by another faith and way altogether.

Try as hard as we may to do nothing about Christ, life will not let us. In wartime, whether or not a man can really be a pacifist, can stand aside and refuse to help one side or the other, is a debated question among us. But we have Christ's own word that no man can be a spiritual pacifist where his gospel and his way of life are concerned: "He that is not with me," said he, "is against me." Indifference about him, no less than opposition to him, makes up our life against him.

Most of us, I imagine, have at some time or other received a telegram with these words attached: "Answer requested." So Christianity presents itself to you and me in the days of youth. It is a message from God with "answer requested." As Browning put it:

> What think ye of Christ, friend?
> When all's done and said,
> Like you think Christianity or not?
> It may be false, but will you wish it true?
> Has it your vote to be so, if it can?

Answer requested! And if someone here this morning is saying now that he can put that decision off indefinitely, I hope he won't say it too long. No answer, remember, is nevertheless an answer! "Take your time," life says, "you've got two minutes!"

III

Finally, the importance of our valley of decision in the earlier years of life is that, once past, it is forever past. We cannot call the years back and do them over. Turn the clock back by turning the hands back—you can do that; but you can't turn time back a single hour. You can't call time back to that hour, say, when a commanding whisper sounded in your soul and you shut the lips of conscience with a defiant "No!" Paste that leaf labeled January 1945 back on your calendar—you can do that; but you can never recall January 1945.

Mr. Marquand puts it vividly in one of his earlier stories. In *H. M. Pulham, Esquire* he tells of a young man in Boston who fell in love with a girl in New York. He is about to marry her, but he doesn't. He

oes back to Boston to the girl his Boston family have cked out for him, and marries her. Then toward ie last of the story he meets again his old sweet-eart, the girl to whom he would really like to go ack to, and he thinks sadly to himself: "We can ever go back, Marvin. I struggle with what has come etween us, and I know what it is. It is time. There as been so much time, you know—a whole, long road f it."

What a parable of many a man's personal spiritual efeat! Clear as a bell within his soul many a man as heard the words of Christ, "Follow me." The call f God came to burn his bridges behind him, and he *lmost* burned them. But why not wait? Waiting ould do no harm and there was plenty of time, and o he waited. But the more convenient season never eemed to come, and the result is that while this man ow may want Christ in a way, he cannot want him as e once did. A Persian prince, they say, divided life nto four decades: the first for travel, the second for ffairs of state, the third for friendship, and the fourth or God; but he died, alas, in the first decade! And here are many people like that, spiritually. Having ut God *off,* they find at last they have put him *out.* Their power fully to commit life to him died in the irst decade! If only they could go back to that day vhen the Master's voice was saying, "Follow me!" But they can't. They can accept the great beliefs, per-aps, but they have lost the capacity for feeling deeply he great Christian enthusiasms. Back there when ife seemed to stretch out in endless vistas of oppor-unity, it was later than they thought. So much time o live, but so little time to decide!

The story is told of a man who dreamed one night hat he was carried to a conference of evil spirits. They were discussing the best means of destroying men. One rose and said: "I will go to earth and tell them the Bible is a fable, and not God's word." Another said: 'Persuade them that Christ was only a man." Still an-other said: "Let me go: I will tell them there is no God, no Savior, no heaven, no hell." "No, that will not do," they said. "We could never make men be-lieve that." Finally one old devil, wise as a serpent but not as harmless as a dove, rose and said: "Let me go. I'll journey to the world of men and tell them that there is a God, there is a Savior, there is a heaven, and a hell too. But I will tell them there is no hurry; tomorrow will do; tomorrow will be even as today!" And he was the devil they sent!

The story is fiction, but its message a fact. That devil is among us now, but the wise are not deceived by his lies. "What will you do with Jesus, who is called the Christ?" Face to face with that question, the man who thinks that tomorrow will do even as today is of all men the most deceived. What looks like plenty of time ahead is only a gigantic illusion, a devil's mirage. Delay has been for all too many a synonym for doom. There is only one best time for de-cision—*now.* "Today, if ye will hear his voice, then harden not your heart." "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." "Take your time, son, you've got two minutes!"

New Moons and New Years

By L. K. Bishop

WHEN the famous sculptor Thorwaldson was asked, "Which is your greatest statue?" he replied, "The next one." In his witty answer he embarrassed the perpetual optimism of the human race.

There is something in our nature which makes us look forward to tomorrow, the coming season, the next year, or the next century. We have an undying faith that tomorrow or the next year will be a better period in which to live, to realize our dreams, to accomplish our goals.

We have learned to believe that progress is inevitable and that time improves all conditions. These tendencies are not peculiar to our generation for through the centuries the human race has depended on seasons, calendars and the passing of time for new beginnings. To the primitive man every new moon brought a change of luck and a new control over the evil spirit. The new moon was the time for festivals, dances and rejoicing. The gods were always nearest him at the season of the new moon.

When man began to count time by years, the calendar became his chart of the seasons. Each new year gave him a new grasp on life and a new beginning in solving its problems. The early Christians adopted this philosophy of life and expressed it in the changes at the turn of each century. They were sure that in the year 100 A. D. Christ would return and God would take over the earth. When this failed they expected the year 500 A. D. to bring some cataclysmic change. Disappointed in this hope they waited for the year 1000 A. D., when they were certain the passing of time would bring new beginnings and changes for the better.

'THERE WILL COME A TIME'

We have adopted the same philosophy in our modern age. We believe "there will come a time." In the depression years we were waiting for the time to come when we would "round the corner." Now we are waiting for something tremendous to happen "when Germany surrenders," "when the war is over," "when the boys come marching home." This optimism is founded on the belief that time changes things and time improves things. Perhaps the proverb, "Time is a great healer," has come out of this hope that is basic in every human heart.

A more accurate and adequate philosophy of life is expressed by Isaiah and it is proved in our experience. New beginnings come not in new seasons but in new attitudes. Changes in life come not as we tear the years from the calendar but as we adopt new spirits and new purposes. The solution to life's prob-

lems comes not in the passing of time but in self-discipline and self-dedication, as we search out the answers to the many intricate problems which confront us each day.

Isaiah understood some of these problems of life when he called upon Israel to forget the new moon, the fastings and festivals, celebrations and rituals, and to set itself to forming new attitudes—learning to do good, seeking justice, upholding the rights of orphans and widows. Like Isaiah let us transfer our emphasis from new moons, new seasons and new calendars to new attitudes, higher purposes and more religious conduct. Perhaps like Israel we will find an answer, a courage and a satisfaction which the passing of the years has failed to bring.

Like the proud boy who anticipates a radical transition in his life on his sixth birthday, we are apt to put our dependence in the arrival of a new year. We are tempted to believe that something old, burdensome and distasteful drops from our being when we pass from the old to the new. Like the little boy we are apt to expect new personality, new freedom, new satisfactions, merely because the calendar has changed.

PROGRESS NOT INEVITABLE

In our saner moments we know that personal growth and transition come through struggle and the painful growing processes. The learning process which Isaiah urged upon Israel is a long, difficult process. Personal development and spiritual enrichment come through it. Like the education of a child's mind from infancy to adulthood, so the changing of the human spirit from its selfishness to a generous soul is a lengthy process; Isaiah spoke well when he said the words, "Learn to do good."

There is nothing in the Jewish Christian tradition to lead one to believe that progress is inevitable. We hold no confidence in new moons or new years. How simple it would be if the passing of the years changed a sinner into a saint, if it revolutionized a bigoted, narrow mind into a generous understanding sympathetic individual! How willing we all would be to wait patiently for the passing of time if we knew that the years would bring a mellowing process which would change all men into neighbors, friends and brothers.

But we have learned to know that our woes and burdens are not lessened by the passing of time, but rather by self-discipline and self-dedication and by a deliberate attempt to learn to do good. As we gain insight into the spiritual resources that are available to us and as we deliberately build new attitudes, banish our prejudices and imitate the spirit of Christ, we discover changes taking place. New strengths arise and our better self becomes a reality. Inner satisfaction develops, personality expands, and the Christian virtues become secure within us as we bring our life to conform to the universal laws of God. Like the musician in the orchestra we learn to play in time and harmony, thereby contributing to the great symphony as we merge our personality and our life into the pattern of music which enriches life.

The skills of living are mastered as one learns the truth of the commandment, "Love your enemies . . . and pray for them which despitefully use you." The technique of contributing to the music of life is an accomplished fact when we discover that we are our brother's keeper and are bound by the example of the Good Samaritan. It is only by deliberate effort and the long process of learning that we finally arrive at a consciousness of the fact that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" and in this consciousness we lose our race prejudice, our nationalism and our white superiority. The laws of learning are rigid and the adjustments to life come only when we work at the task of learning the skills of living.

We are wiser than our primitive ancestors, for we have discovered that new moons do not improve human relationships. The dream of social justice, of brotherhood, is not realized in ritual, festivals and seasons, but in the search for justice and a deliberate attempt to banish oppression. We do not know all that was involved in Isaiah's admonition to seek justice and to restrain the oppressor, but we are sure that justice does not increase as the years multiply. Oppressors are not less numerous or less popular because we live in the twentieth century.

We have a dream of a world community in which the brotherhood of man will become a reality and the Prince of Peace will dominate the philosophy of the human race. In former years we have believed that when Christianity had time to spread throughout the earth this dream would come true. Yet time has not brought fulfillment of our dream. We would like to believe that the coming of the new year would bring us closer to a world community in which peace, brotherhood, understanding and love shall be the principal laws of life. But it is not true. There are many problems to be solved. There are many misunderstandings to be rectified. There are many prejudices to be overcome. If we would bring a new justice and a new community into our world we must do it by deliberate effort and by purposeful intent. This does not mean that our world community is an impossibility. It only means that the changing of the moon, the passing of the years, does not guarantee accomplishment. The hand of man must be set to the task. The head of man must be put to work. The heart of man must be consecrated to the ideal.

HOW BUILD A WORLD CHURCH?

For many centuries we have been dreaming of a world church. Those who name the name of Christ have been praying that some day his people might be one. The unity of the church and the solidarity of Christian people are constantly before us as a mirage in a desert. Yet it must not be a mirage. It must be a reality. Neither the new moon, the passing of the years, nor the change of the centuries has brought about this world church. Only the spirit of Christ burning in the hearts of individuals can build such a church. When the faith of Jesus Christ rises above national boundaries, overlaps color lines, and ignores the other artificial divisions of the human race, then there can come about

unity, affection and comradeship for which we n.

ime will not heal the breech which has divided the ch and continued to multiply her divisions. Neither moons nor new years will work the magic of unity ng God's people. There must arise within us new udes, new purposes, new spirits. These will come when we set ourselves deliberately at the task of ting social justice, brotherhood and spiritual unity. Dr. Samuel Johnson once said: "I have been re- ing for these fifty years; now I take hold of God." haps this is a transition needed within the com- nity of the church, a transition from resolution to a n grasp on God and a conformity to his will and ching.

PURE RELIGION AND UNDEFILED

As Isaiah called his people away from the festival reminded them that it was not in ritual, revelry or tous festival that the growth and development of e religion was to be found. If one is searching for rue experience of religion, he is more likely to find n service to his fellow men and in a spirit of mercy, arity and brotherly love. James takes up this same te of warning as he reminds the people of New Test- ent days that true religion which is undefiled con- ts in visiting the fatherless and the widows and keep- g oneself unspotted from the world. How many of saints have been tempted to count the passing of e years rather than the rendering of service as piety! ow often we find individuals who relate the number years they have been members of the church rather an the amount of service they have rendered! Fre- ently we remember that we have been regular in urch attendance, that we have been faithful at the ord's Table for many years. But we fail to examine ir souls to find the mercy and brotherly love that ve been expended during these years.

In Africa it is the custom for every chief to have a *sako* or life motto. One old chief, when asked one ay for his *losako,* replied: "When you pass through ie jungle, be very careful to break a twig, that the ext man can find his way." Perhaps it is more im- ortant how many twigs we have broken as we pass rough the jungle than it is how many years we have een in the jungle.

If we are to build on earth a kingdom worthy of eing God's Kingdom, if our eternal optimism is to be stified and the tomorrows which we anticipate are to ring new opportunity, if there is to be an inevitable- ess to progress, it must be because we, an undaunted nd courageous people, set our hands, heads and hearts accomplishing and insuring that progress.

Let none of us be misled in joining the new moon stivals of our ancient fathers. Let us not tear the onth of December from the old calendar with too reat a glee. Rather shall we enter the new year with ie admonition of Isaiah inscribed on our hearts: Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of our doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; arn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, dge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

Church Women and the New World

By Georgia Harkness*

IN THE twenty-seventh chapter of Acts is a vivid picture of a ship tossed by a storm at sea. It is well worth reading for the drama of the story: the conflict of opinions as to whether to set sail, the casting overboard of much precious cargo to try to save the ship, Paul the prisoner taking command and bringing order out of panic with his calm, "Be of good cheer," spoken in the name of the Lord. Tucked away in the story is a significant sentence which only recently came to my attention: "Fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day."

One could draw many applications from this story to describe the storm now sweeping the earth. Everywhere there is fear lest, having expended all, we may yet "fall upon the rocks," and everywhere men "wish for the day." Have we four anchors by which to hold firm through the night? As Christians, we know that we have.

THE CHRISTIAN'S FOUR ANCHORS

There is, first, our anchor of faith in God. We have rightly for the past two years been studying and thinking much about the "six pillars of peace." They are great and necessary pillars—international collaboration, economic cooperation, peaceful change, autonomy for subject peoples, control of armaments, religious and intellectual liberty. We need to think and act resolutely to bring them into being, for without them we shall not have peace in the world. Yet without a more basic foundation than any of these pillars, the pillars themselves cannot stand. This foundation is the living God, the Lord of history, who delivers us from evil as we seek to do his will. It is significant that the song of the angels on the first Christmas morning, "Peace on earth, good will among men," comes not from any human wisdom, whether of shepherds or wise men. It comes from God himself, and because it is of God we know it can be fulfilled.

Our second anchor in time of storm is faith in the way of love revealed in Jesus Christ. In Christ we read many things about the nature of God and his will for the world. In fact, it is our basic Christian faith that in Christ the word of God—his utterance to men—was made flesh and dwelt among us. But above all else this utterance of God was the word of love

*Dr. Harkness preached this sermon at the service of ecumenical worship of the Second Biennial Assembly of the United Council of Church Women, at Columbus, Ohio, November 14, 1944.

and of reconciliation. It is our charter as Christians that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." Its great correlate—our challenge and our hope—is the other half of this quotation, "He hath committed *unto us* the word of reconciliation."

Our third anchor is one which sets Christianity apart from all other religions—our Lord's teaching of the supreme worth and dignity of every human soul in the eyes of God. We hear much in these times of "the American way of life" and of the "four freedoms." What is valid in these great watchwords points beyond America and beyond political democracy to their source in Jesus' example and teaching of the relations of men to one another in the family of God. To be sure, Jesus did not talk much, in explicit terms, about one's duty to the state. But in every word and act as he moved among men he made persons of supreme worth because they are supreme in God's sight, and this leveled all human distinctions. A child set in the midst as type of the Kingdom of Heaven, a conversation about living water with a despised woman of Samaria, an adulteress forgiven and lifted from sin, a publican called to be his disciple or invited to be his host, a Roman centurion's servant healed, a nobleman's son or a Syro-Phoenician woman's daughter freed of a dread disease, a cup of cold water to one of his little ones made the touchstone of reward—in such acts and events of daily life our Lord's democracy was revealed. Except as such a spirit actuates us in our attitudes toward those of other races, classes, nations, all our talk of democracy, and our sons' giving of their best years and their lifeblood to preserve it, will be tragic waste.

Our fourth anchor is Jesus' central teaching—his favorite theme—the coming of the Kingdom of God among men. There are many opinions as to just what Jesus meant by the Kingdom, and into these subtleties of argument I shall not now enter. One thing is certain—that to him the Kingdom meant the fatherly rule of God—the gathering of men into a spiritual community in which all men are brothers because all are God's sons, and in which God's will is accepted as law. Though some would place the Kingdom solely in a realm beyond this earth, I see no justification for doing so if we are to go on praying, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done *on earth* as it is in heaven." The establishment of a spiritual world community, the counterpart on earth of God's eternal Kingdom, is our promise and our task. Only as we labor to bring it to reality shall we have peace and security among men. God rules our world and whatever the cunning devices and subterfuges of men, there is no road to peace save his.

'FOREGLEAMS OF THE KINGDOM'

These, then, are our four anchors by which to be firm in our time of waiting—our faith in the living God, our faith in Christ's way of love, our faith in the supreme worth of every human soul, our faith in the coming of a Kingdom of spiritual fellowship under the rule of God.

The fact of our meeting together as an ecumenical body of church women itself gives evidence that these anchors have been cast down. In our praying together around the world, every day I trust, but especially on our World Day of Prayer; in the fellowship of the Christian church where bonds of love remain unbroken by the strains of war; in the missionary enterprise as we seek to carry Christ to "the last, the least, the lost"; in a Christian world community which spans the boundaries of nation, race and all other man-made divisions to be at least a foregleam of the Kingdom, we find ourselves held firm by these anchors. For these we can thank God and take courage.

The story of how the ecumenical church has come into being, just as the world was falling apart, is a thrilling tale of divine providence. In a time of bombs and concentration camps, hunger and homelessness, persecution and the loss of all things save faith in God, the church has gone forward toward unity and strength. Today, in spite of its tragic divisions, the Church of Christ is more united in its life and work than at any time since the Protestant Reformation. Once more we are learning the truth of the word of Tertullian, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

We have much work yet to do if a world of peace with justice is to be fashioned. We must cast down our four anchors into the tempestuous waters of human misery, and find there not only anchorage for ourselves but for our world.

FAITH IN THE LIVING GOD

I shall attempt now to say what difference I think these anchors make in our contemporary situation. The pit into which as church people we have too often fallen is generality and vagueness, and if our Christian faith is to be politically effective it must bear upon the problems which most immediately confront us.

Our first anchor, faith in the living God, has, of course, a bearing on everything we can do or say. However, I shall speak more particularly of its relation to the inner life, and through this to the shaping of outward events.

It has become a truism that "there are no atheists in foxholes." Nevertheless, I doubt whether this statement is true, either at the battle-front or in the less overt but equally critical perils of the life around us. It is true that as the ordinary foundations of human self-confidence have crumbled a more serious mood has been engendered. If our culture were frankly to confess to its failure to find security in the Gibraltar of human achievement, it might say in the words of the Negro spiritual:

> I went to the rock to hide my face,
> The rock cried out, "no hiding-place,
> No hiding-place down there."

Yet it is a long step from such uncovering of weakness to a true, firm and lifting faith in God. This step I do not see that any great number of the American people have taken, or seem likely to take, as a result of the strains of war.

It will not do to be pessimistic or cynical; still

ss is it in order to be self-righteous about our own iritual attainments as church women. But as we ok around, what do we see? An increasing toll of ath, suffering and personal bereavement calls for an ner stability to be found only in Christian faith. me have it gloriously, and I who have suffered little y my tribute of respect and gratitude to those who ve suffered much and are still able to smile through e night. Yet all around is bitter confusion of spirit cause the people have not been led to a living appro- iation of the promise once given: "My grace is fficient for thee: My strength is made perfect in eakness."

But great though the suffering of our time is, it is ot the worst part of the situation. According to hristian faith, sin is a deeper and darker aspect of the roblems of evil than suffering. Tribulation can teach s much: self-centeredness not only affronts God and arms others but stands in the way of our willingness o be taught. And everywhere self-centeredness im- erils us. As the war advances toward military victory, ne human spirit is put to more and more severe tests, or elation at military victory easily becomes a substi- ute for personal effort to establish the conditions of eace. The very familiarity of the headlines announc- ng the death of thousands of our enemies—all of them ersons loved by somebody—dulls us to the poignancy f the tragedy. We even grow insensitive to mount- ng casualty lists on our side until the blow falls on omeone we know personally. Personal indulgence s mounting, the morals of family life are being re- axed. All around us artificial prosperity dulls concern or deeper issues, and while I know of no one who really wants the war to continue longer than it must, here are many who do want what the war is bringing o them. According to all the signs physical and spiritual fatigue, cynicism regarding the future, vin- dictiveness toward enemies, are increasing. For mul- itudes, the sole concern is not the "six pillars of peace" or the welfare of other peoples, but as speedy a release as possible from the personal inconveniences and up- heavals of war.

Here is our major problem of demobilization—of the period "from victory to peace"—to keep the souls not only of soldiers but of civilians from lapsing into apathy, self-centeredness, and indifference to any claims beyond one's own immediate horizons. Along this route lie inevitably political isolationism and the seeds of future wars.

The churches have a function here which no other agency is likely to perform. Only through faith in God and confidence in his rulership shall we find the power either to endure or to do what must be done for a better tomorrow—the shaping of a new world peace with justice.

This means that we need to pray more, and pray with a wider realization of the scope of God's human family. It means that in our church life we must so unite worship with study and action as to avoid, on the one hand, making of religion an emotional luxury and, on the other, making our churches into secular forums or social clubs. It means subordination of the organizational structure of the church to its gospel message, as the body is instrument to the soul. It means far more effort than we have put forth thus far to bridge the gap between the churches and the unchurched. In a word, if our first anchorage is faith in God, we must before all else hold that faith, live by it, proclaim it to a shattered world.

FAITH IN CHRIST'S WAY OF LOVE

Our second anchor is the way of love and reconciliation revealed in Jesus Christ. It is at this point that the Christian outlook is most sharply challenged by the events of our time. What place has love, we are asked repeatedly, in a world of tyranny and aggression, of cruel persecution, of the "liquidation" of Jews, of robot bombs, of ruthless destruction of historic landmarks, of obliteration bombing and the roasting alive of helpless civilians, of the shooting of the captured enemy to avoid taking prisoners, of mass starvation not only of enemies but of friends? Shall we not reserve love and reconciliation to be talked about in the "spiritual" atmosphere of a church, admired perhaps in the sweet medieval saintliness of St. Francis, while the practical affairs of life are settled otherwise? Many persons, including some Christians, are of this opinion.

Let it be clear that I am not suggesting we can "love our enemies" in the same warm, intimate way in which you love your husbands and your children. I doubt that Jesus was ever so naive as to suppose we could. What we can do, and are bidden to do, is to feel good will toward all persons including our enemies, act justly toward them, pray for them in the spirit of Christ: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Before America became embroiled in the present conflict, it was pointed out repeatedly that among the most potent factors leading to Hitler's rise to power were the bitterness of the German people from the injustices of Versailles, shattering of confidence from the repudiation of President Wilson's Fourteen Points, the refusal of the victor nations to move toward their promised progressive disarmament, the failure of the older democracies to support, either economically or politically, the struggling young democracy of the Weimar Republic. We do not hear these things as often as we did formerly. But the facts have not changed.

The lessons may be forgotten, but the effects of such courses cannot be evaded. A proposal to cripple the industrial life of Germany means not only the economic crippling of all Europe but the curtailing of our own trade. It means, furthermore, a goad to make German soldiers fight a losing battle with desperate fury, and hence the loss of American lives through the prolonging of war. A proposal to dismember and pulverize Germany means a permanent army of occupation—composed in part of your sons—to hold down a rebellious people, and Europe not a scene of peaceful enterprise but an armed camp for decades to come. A proposal to re-educate Germany by forcing upon her a democratic ideology from without overlooks the simple

but important fact that if democracy is not accepted by the will of the people, it is not democratic!

How, then, shall we deal with our vanquished enemies? On this the church has spoken, and is continuing to speak.

The Federal Council of Churches has said: "We believe that it is contrary to the moral order that nations in their dealings with one another should be motivated by a spirit of revenge and retaliation. Such attitudes will lead, as they have always led, to renewed conflict."

The Delaware Conference said: "There should be no punitive reparations, no humiliating decrees of war guilt, and no arbitrary dismemberment of nations."

It is our job as church women, not only to read and admire such statements but to get them into our own thinking and living, and into the thinking and living of the people. The statesmen cannot make the peace alone, and what we get will, by and large, be what the people ask for.

FAITH IN THE COMMON MAN

Our third anchor is the worth and dignity of all persons as sons and daughters of God. Without this foundation there can be no true democracy. The democracy of Jesus in the acts and attitudes of daily life stands in judgment on all our popular shibboleths, all our vaunted petty superiorities, all our divisions of race and class which exist even within the house of God. Though we easily speak the great Christian words, "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female," we are a long way from being "one in Christ Jesus." Until not only Jew and Gentile, but Negro and white man—and white woman—can kneel together in prayer, eat together in fellowship, live together in equality, we shall not have a truly democratic or Christian society.

It is a sobering truth that many more persons are willing to give money for the evangelization of Japan than are able to maintain good will toward the Japanese in time of national tension. Similarly, we have been more eager to take Christianity to the colored folk of Africa than to act like Christians toward those of our own communities. There are thousands of loyal Japanese-Americans and loyal Negroes now fighting for us and for democracy who may perhaps be pardoned for asking, "*What* democracy?"

Without faith in and practice of democracy, there can be no just and lasting peace. It is, therefore, the more important that as we fight to preserve democracy we shall not lose it in our own midst. Some surrender of it in wartime is inevitable; the danger is that such surrender may not terminate when the war is over. This is why the proposal for universal peacetime conscription of youth is so serious that no church woman should rest until she has declared herself against it. Statements asking either for the outright rejection of peacetime conscription or for postponement of its consideration until after the war have been made by the National Education Association, by the Federal Council of Churches, and by most of the major Protestant denominations. Not the least of these pronouncements was made last June by the board of directors of the United Council of Church Women. You will recall that we declared:

> Believing peacetime conscription to be opposed in principle both to the democratic way of life and the Christian belief in the worth and dignity of the individual, and believing that all young people should have an adequate opportunity to complete their education, we urge that Congress take no action looking toward the peacetime conscription of youth. (June 16, 1944)

This action I urge you to ratify as an Assembly and to follow up with a great volume of individual letters to your congressmen. If conscription as a permanent policy wins, both peace and democracy will in a large measure be lost.

FAITH IN A WORLD COMMUNITY

Our fourth anchor is the spiritual community to be fashioned under the fatherly rule of God—the Kingdom which Jesus saw by faith and to which he called his disciples. It would be a mistake to identify this Kingdom with any political or social structure. Not even the Church of Christ is pure enough, in its human aspects, to be the embodiment of the Kingdom. Though it is the carrier of a divine message and has its true home in God, the church is composed of feeble human instruments. What can it do to stand against the storm?

What the church can do is to demonstrate in its life and witness the meaning of the Kingdom as a spiritual fellowship in Christ. This it is already doing, however brokenly, through its world mission, through the ecumenical movement, through its effort to establish the foundations of just and durable peace. We rejoice in the "great new fact of our time," the present fact of a world Christian community.

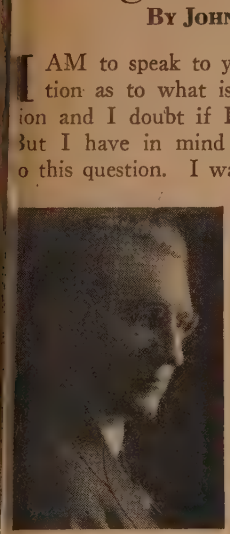
No one here needs to be told that these are critical times, for the shape of the new world is already being determined. The appropriate attitude toward the world organization now being called into being through Dumbarton Oaks is neither discouragement nor laudation. It offers far less than one could hope in securing the rights of smaller nations and colonial peoples: yet it is a beginning on which to build. Secretary Hull, in emphasizing the tentativeness of the plan and the fact that it is being made available for study by governments and peoples, has set before us a challenge to build into it what needs to be there "for the healing of the nations." If the churches do not speak, there will be less of world collaboration and justice. If church women do not speak, we shall again be guilty of missing the opportunity to build a world organization on justice and equality.

What is our contribution to the fashioning of a new world? It is to pray, to study, to speak, to vote, to act, to live by these four anchors cast down for steadiness in a storm-tossed world. Only by faith in God, faith in good will, faith in the common man, faith in a world community shall we find security. We must act and keep on acting without discouragement, in humility, by God's strength, assured that God can take our littleness and use it for the advancement of his Kingdom of love.

This Thing Called Religion—What Is It?

By John Haynes Holmes

I AM to speak to you this morning upon the question as to what is religion. This is an old question and I doubt if I can say anything that is new. But I have in mind a somewhat unusual approach to this question. I want to present religion in a relation to human life which will perhaps open up an understanding of religion that we have not had before.



Let me begin by pointing out that religion has always been presented from one or the other of two points of view. That is to say, there have been two theories about religion. One is the supernatural theory. Religion is something that is divinely bestowed upon us from without, or from above. It is an inspired revelation of the mind of God through the mouth of some holy prophet, or the pages of some holy book, or the dogmas of some holy church. In this sense, religion is unique and strange—a miracle that renews itself, from hour to hour, in the soul of the believer. The other theory is the natural theory. Religion is something that belongs to human nature, and therefore has its origin within the soul. It is a part, and the highest part, of man's day-to-day experience with the world and with his mind. From this point of view, religion is not unique or strange at all, but as normal as sleep at night or waking in the morning—as nourishing as bread, as quickening as water, as wholesome as fresh air. There is nothing miraculous about it, apart from the daily miracle of life itself.

BEGINNING WITH MAN

It is needless for me to explain that it is this second theory of religion which I accept. My whole approach to this problem is humanistic rather than theological. I start my thought with man and not with God—with this earth and not with heaven—with the facts of experience and not with the myths of revelation. If religion is to be found anywhere it is to be found in the heart of man—in the joys and sorrows, the dreams and visions of that heart. That it ends there, I do not believe. The heart of man is like a key that opens the doors of "many mansions"; the experience of man is the turning of that key. Before we get through, this experience will take us into the very presence of God. Which means that religion has to do with God as well as man! But this does not mean that religion suddenly goes supernatural. It remains natural because it begins with the heart of man—and there finds God. Which reminds me of the familiar saying, that "religion is the life of God in the soul of man"!

We begin, therefore, with man—and his experience through many ages upon this earth. What does this tell us about religion?

In the south of France, in the Department of Dordogne, were found some years ago a variety of caves, in which were deposited the bones and skulls of several dozen men and women. These remains were identified as belonging to the Cro-Magnon race of man, which inhabited the southwestern portion of Europe at the close of the Magdalenian epoch. This would be many thousands of years before the birth of Christ.

There were some remarkable things in these caves, besides the bones, which proved them to be the abode of man. None was more remarkable than some free-hand drawings upon the walls. Conspicuous among these drawings was a sketch of a wild ox, or steer, which has now become one of the most famous and admired works in the whole history of Western art. The animal as here depicted is so vital, so full of energy, so touched with the beauty of line and feature! Just think of it—here at a time when there was no literature, or even language, when there were no cities or roads or houses, when man was living almost as an animal in caves of the earth and shelters of the rock, when he was himself a rude competitor with the beasts of the field for mere physical survival, at this early moment in his career, man became an artist. He started drawing upon any plain surface that he chanced to find. This work of art was purely gratuitous, or supererogatory. It could have no imaginable relation with the struggle for existence. It represented deeper and finer instincts than any mere hunger of the flesh. It was the beginning of that creative impulse of the inner life which in later ages produced its Raphaels and Michelangelos, and has filled the world with glory.

THREE ELEMENTS OF EXPRESSION

If we analyze this early Cro-Magnon art, this leaping ox upon the wall, we shall find that it contains at least three elements of expression.

First, there is the outer world of reality—this wild animal which this primitive artist saw and wanted to reproduce. This is what we call experience—this living relationship between ourselves and our environment. In this case, the experience was vivid and accurate in observation. Not only artists come to these caves to study these drawings, but zoologists to see the kind of animals that lived in southwestern Europe so many thousand years ago.

Second, there is the soul of the artist, which made this drawing upon the wall of the cave more beautiful than any animal that he actually saw with his own eyes. What he saw without was only the suggestion, or inspiration, of what he conceived within. The animal was a pattern, or design, on which he labored, and from which he drew the lines of beauty which were implicit in what he had seen. This is the function of the artist—to discover the latent beauty that lies within the various objects of nature, and then to disclose it to other and less clairvoyant eyes. No man was ever as beautiful as the Apollo Belvedere, no woman as beautiful as the Venus de Milo; no mother

and child ever revealed such spirituality as the Sistine Madonna of Raphael, no peasants such beauty of holiness as the Angelus group of Millet. But in ordinary men and women the artists saw these wonders, as in an ordinary wild ox the Cro-Magnon artist saw this marvelous creature scratched upon the wall of his cave. What they saw and then recreated was the hidden secret of reality. And this was the work of their own souls.

This leads us to the third element in the Cro-Magnon drawing. I refer to that ideal beauty which the artist strove after but did not attain. As his drawing was actually more beautiful than the animal itself, so the picture that lay within the artist's soul was more beautiful than anything that his rude flint was able to transfer to the rough wall of his cave. His imagination reached beyond his handiwork; the greatest painters and sculptors can reproduce nothing more than a suggestion of that perfect vision which they see "with the mind's eye." For these artists, like pure mathematicians, as Edna St. Vincent Millay has reminded us in her great sonnet, have looked on "beauty bare." Deep down within themselves they have seen the pure essence of aesthetic being. Beauty itself—Beauty written with a capital letter! It is this which is the inspiration of the whole. Though the artist, however wonderful his hand, can never recreate what he sees so perfectly within himself, yet it is the glowing presence of what he sees that gives him the impulse and the decision to do anything at all. It is the vision which creates the work of art.

THE ETERNAL IDEAL

It is the glory of philosophy, which is man's deepest thought, that in every age it has insisted that the abstract, or absolute, ideal is as real as any object in the physical world. Nay, that the physical world itself has no reality except as it is related to this inner world of vision! It was Plato who first declared this truth of the basic reality of the ideal. There is nothing real, said the great Athenian philosopher, but the ideas, or ideals, which we find present here within our minds. All physical things about us, these physical sensations with which they are interlaced, are the mere shadows, or reflections, of this single reality which exists within the mind. What we conceive as an idea, or imagine as an ideal, this is the substance of the only real world that exists at all. And these ideas, or ideals, are real, as contrasted with the shadow of this earth, because they are themselves the shadows, or reflections, of that all-embracing and eternal Ideal which is God.

We do not see the significance of this animal in the cave of the Cro-Magnon artist, until we see this truth of the Spirit as the sole reality of life. As we look upon this drawing, we see first the creature that roamed the forests in the ancient day; then we see the artist's recreation of his animal in such lines of beauty as he could master in outward form and symbol; and lastly we see, or ought to see, the vision that lived within the artist's soul — that ideal Beauty which haunted him, and tortured him, and drove him at some fateful moment to his great achievement. This is art—the living witness of the spirit to man's quest of Beauty.

So important is this point of view in our understanding of religion—what it is, and what is its validity—that I am going to tax your patience by giving you another illustration along these same lines. This has to do with music, as my first illustration had to do with art.

There is evidence that music came as early into man's life as painting and sculpture. The evidence is not so good, as man discovered a system of musical notation rather late in his career. Man played by ear for centuries before he played by note. But the early legends of the race tell of music as a potent influence in man's experience. Thus, there is the Greek story of Orpheus, who made such wonderful music that even the rocks and trees were moved by his harmonies. Then there is the Hebrew story of Jubal, who, in the early days of the world, became "the father of all such as handle the harp and organ." From these primitive beginnings developed what we must believe was the glorious music which accompanied the ancient Greek drama—and the sacred harmonies which were heard in the worship of the Jewish temple. But of all this there is no record. We can only assume that music developed as art developed, and manifested the same three elements of being.

TOWARD THE UNATTAINABLE IN MUSIC

First, the outward world of human experience! Music was undoubtedly first suggested by what man heard with his ear, as painting was suggested by what he saw with his eye. The great god Pan cut a reed by the river and made it into a pipe, because he had listened to the birds and wanted to reproduce their singing. Then there was the sound of the wind in the trees, of the sea upon the shore, of man's own voice as he called to his sheep, or summoned his comrades into battle. As surely as the wild ox in the forest set that Cro-Magnon artist's fingers scrawling upon the wall of his cave, so surely these various sounds of nature stirred men like Orpheus and Jubal to try their hands at making instruments upon which they could play. It is the world, and man's experience therein, that prompts the idea and stirs the impulse.

But the idea and the impulse lie within. Which brings us, with music exactly as with painting, to the soul of the artist as the second element of our problem! No sound in nature is so beautiful as what man hears within, and tries to reproduce upon some instrument. In his process of reproduction he recreates, and thus at last makes music that "never was on land or sea." What is only suggested in the song of the bird and the sigh of the wind his soul elaborates, until he needs a symphony orchestra and an operatic stage to express his feeling. For music is not what we hear without, but what we feel within in response to what we hear without. Walt Whitman has the right idea when he writes that "music is what awakens within us when we are reminded by the instruments." So the soul of man is the second element in what we know as music.

Third, there is the Ideal—that perfect music which

en the greatest musician is never able to reproduce. e hears this divine harmony, but it eludes him—like it "lost chord" which the poet said that "only in aven" should she hear again. We feel this in ethoven, the most titanic, if not the most perfect, mposer who ever lived. Always in Beethoven's work e are conscious of the sense of struggle. He was ying to get hold of those wonderful harmonies which heard so tantalizingly behind his deafened ears. So at his immortal scores are only the record of his ruggles after the Ideal which must remain forever the nattainable. Even the greatest works of Beethoven -his towering symphonies, his mystical quartets— e but a feeble expression of the perfect music with hich silently he lived. For Beethoven, like every eat musician, had come into the Presence. He had et that ideal Beauty which is the essence of music as is of art. And this Beauty is real—as real as the usic of the spheres in heaven, which we cannot hear it know all the while is there.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

Browning's hero, Abt Vogler, was trying all his fe to get this ideal harmony into his organ, and what e played remained only a "semblance" of what he eard. But he knew that this Ideal, though never layed, none the less existed more truly than any of the otes which he sounded upon his instrument. You emember the words of his confession:

> Therefore, to whom turn I but to thee, the Ineffable Name?
> Builder and maker, thou, of houses not made with hands! . . .
> On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven, the perfect round.

I think you will agree with me that this is coming retty close to what we call religion. And so it is! or religion is of exactly the same substance in the life f man as art and music. This is the one great point hich I want to impress upon your mind this morning -that religion, like art and music, is an expression f man's life upon this planet. As art is the report f what he sees, and music the report of what he hears, hen religion may be described as the report of what e is. Art reveals the ideal beauty that resides in all ppearance, music the perfect harmony that resides in ll sound, and religion the ideal spirit which resides n all being. It is as simple, as natural, as spontaneous s that. Nothing strange about it at all—nothing nusual, or miraculous, or supernatural! When the ro-Magnon saw that wild animal in the jungle, he elt something instinctively stir within him, and he ook up a flint and began to scratch a drawing upon he wall. When Orpheus, or Jubal, or someone else in he early days, heard a bird sing in the morning, or a rook babble at noontide, or the sea moan at night, he as suddenly reminded of something in his soul, and e proceeded to cut a reed, or string a harp, and make he first strains of music.

So when man looked upon the vast world of nature, nd saw "the heavens," the work of some one's fingers, as he thought, and "the moon and the stars" which some one must have "ordained," he was moved, in awe and wonder, to speculate as to "what is man that thou are mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?" This is religion—like art and music, and poetry and architecture, and love—a groping after the Ultimate, the Eternal, the Ideal, the source of all reality, and therefore composed of the same three elements to which, in the case of art and music, I have referred.

Thus, religion begins with the outer world, and man's reaction upon it. Very early in his career, he encountered forces of which he was afraid—winds, and storms, and lightning, wild animals and the night. These forces, so mighty and so dreadful, seemed to be hostile to his welfare, and he regarded them as enemies to be propitiated and appeased. Other forces in the world were friendly—the light that ushered in the day, the rain that fertilized the soil, the grain that grew and fed the mouth with food—and these he came to regard as friends to be loved and gladly served. And always there were things in the world which stirred awe and reverence within his soul—the mountains, the forests, the sea, the stars, and all the vast pageant of the seasons. It was when he saw these stupendous and beautiful phenomena, and through them the unaccountable marvel of the whole natural creation, that he was moved to kneel, and pray, and erect altars, and worship. What this all meant he did not know—to whom he gave his offerings and devotions, he could not tell—but this was the spontaneous reaction of his life upon the vaster life which compassed him about.

THE SOUL AT WORK

This brings us to the second element of religion, which is the soul within. This soul begins to work upon the world, and try to understand it. In so doing, it begins to recreate the world in ideal forms—just like the soul of the artist and the musician! Thus, man found chaos in the world, and proceeded to put order into it by conceiving laws and relationships. He began to explain to his mind what was going on in this extraordinary place where he was living, and thus brought meaning and purpose into its activities. Above all, man began to discover—or so he thought!—that there were moral values in the world. These dangerous forces which confronted him—these he came to regard as evil. The friendly forces, on the other hand, were helpful and kind, and therefore he thought of them as good. Here, fullblown, was the distinction between good and evil, in relation to the life of man. This meant that man himself must be good or evil in relation to his own words and deeds, and the inner motives of his life. This led to the creation, if I may so express it, of an ethical system, of laws and codes of conduct, of the Ten Commandments, of creeds and rituals, of Bibles and churches and holy sabbaths. Man, in other words, became a moral being. By the sheer impact of his inner life upon the outer world, he conceived of nature, and of the whole vast cosmos of reality, in moral, which is to say in spiritual, terms.

But how did man get this way? What power, or

secret, was there within him that led him to such interpretation of his natural environment? How did he bring order out of chaos, if in the world, and in his own soul, there did not already exist an eternal Order? How could he find significance or purpose in the heedless processes of material phenomena, if there was not already a divine Purpose reigning in the heavens, and on the earth? And how could he conceive of good and evil, of right and wrong, of justice and injustice, of love and hate, the whole distinction between the darkness and the light of moral being, unless from the beginning of time there had existed a standard, a value, a law, an eternal Good and an abiding Truth, by which all things could be seen and judged? Surely, there must be a Life within his life, a Spirit above his spirit, an Ideal which moves him and guides him and inspires him to the attainment of what must still lie forever unattainable within the confines of this world.

'THE INEFFABLE NAME'

This brings us in religion, exactly as in art and music, to the third element in our problem. I refer, of course, to that Ideal which is the only real. It is true that there is something in man without which he could never be a man as distinguished from an animal. There is a power within him that takes him beyond himself, and reveals to him those secrets of existence which baffle his mind while they move his heart. What this power is, we do not know. But that it is, we can be sure. A Life which is eternal, and therefore was before all worlds and will be after all worlds are done; a Spirit which is infinite, and therefore pervades all worlds, even as it occupies man's heart; a Truth which is immutable, and therefore is the same yesterday, today and forever; a Worth, or Value, which is imperishable, and therefore must stand forever as the standard of man's word and work; a Good which is purer than man has ever known, a Beauty which is rarer than man has ever seen, an Ideal which is transcendent beyond all that man in his long history has ever dreamed!

This is the Presence which we call divine because it is so much more than human. It is the Idea which Plato taught—"the Ineffable Name," of which Browning spoke. Never seen, never perfectly understood, imagined, suspected, felt after but never found, it is yet the realest thing in the world—and the source and secret of everything else. For this Presence is God. Its power is the Will of God, which we must obey if we would truly live. Its work is the Kingdom of God, which some day, in the course of the years, by God's will and man's endeavor, shall be established on the earth.

Such is religion—man's creative reaction upon the world, under the impulse and guidance of that spirit which is God! Do you wonder that I classified this interpretation of religion with art and music? Do you not see how religion is as simple, as natural, as instinctive, and as glorious, as these other spontaneous expressions of man's spirit? Do you understand, perhaps for the first time, why art and music have always been attached to religion, and have done their noblest work in celebrating religion?

RELIGION AND ART

Where do we turn for the grandest expressions of man's work in wood and stone, if not to the temples and cathedrals and tombs which he has reared in every age—the Parthenon in Athens, the cathedral in Cologne? The greatest sculptures in man's history depicted Jupiter and Apollo and Venus, the deities of the classic world, and Moses and David and the Mater Pieta, the religious saints of Judaism and Christianity. The greatest paintings have been inspired by religious themes—the Last Judgment of Michelangelo, the Transfiguration of Raphael, the Assumption of Murillo. As for music, it has ever sung the praises of Almighty God, as in the immortal masses of Mozart and Beethoven, the oratorios of Handel, and the vast chorals of Bach. Art and music have frequently been called the handmaidens of religion. They are more truly the comrades and fellow workers of religion. Indeed, may we not say that art and music are themselves religion? Have we not all felt the moving of the spirit as we have gazed at the canvas of some great master, or listened to the symphony of some great composer? Our supreme religious experiences, perhaps, have not been listening to a sermon, but hearing the strains of such a song, let us say, as Schubert's "Ave Maria," or looking upon the face of such a woman as Raphael's Madonna of the Chair. It is the combination which is the perfect thing!

I remember an occasion in the great cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. The service was conducted with superb pomp and ceremony, and with deep feeling. The towering edifice of carven stone spread like sunlight the glory of its history and the beauty of its architectural splendor. At intervals, from choir and organ, came bursts of music to lift and entrance the soul. Where did religion begin, and art and music end? It was one voice that spoke that day—and it seemed the "great voice out of heaven" that said, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

THE 'HUMANNESS' OF RELIGION

I return at the end to the point at which I began—the naturalness and humanness of this thing we call religion. It is not something apart by itself—some strange invasion of man's life from mystic and mysterious regions beyond his ken. Rather is it the simple expression of man's own life, the flowering of his innate genius—like art and music, science and philosophy, an expansion of the spirit that lies within the flesh.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his essay on Art, has a remarkable passage which I may well use to sum up this discussion of what this thing called religion really is. Throughout this sermon I have argued that religion is akin to art and music, and that all these together are the expression of man's inner life which is akin to God. So says the Concord sage.

"The Gothic cathedrals," he writes, "were built

hen the builder and the priest and the people were verpowered by their faith. . . . The Madonnas of aphael and Titian were made to be worshiped. ragedy was instituted for the like purpose, and the iracles of music: all sprang out of some genuine thusiasm. . . . Beauty, truth and goodness spring ernal in the breast of man. . . . And that Eternal pirit, whose triple face they are, molds from them orever, for his mortal child, images to remind him of ne Infinite."

When Our Boys Come Home

By E. G. Williams

Through wisdom is a house builded and by understanding it is established. Proverbs 24:3.

IT IS no denial or weakening of our will to win, or of our deep sacrificial purpose, that in every heart there is a longing for the day when our boys come home. And we have ample evidence that our lads in uniform just as intensely look forward to that day of victory and of homecoming. For that day we hope! And for that day we pray!

But when that day comes it may not be entirely a day of unalloyed joy and bliss. That homecoming day will not lack its problems, problems that will test both essential character and our spiritual capacity to make profound adjustments; problems that can involve no little measure of heartache and even tragedy unless we are prepared to meet them with intelligence, patience and fine faith. Out of some great pages of the literature of our faith, the wisdom of the Book of Proverbs, comes the warning of our text that by "wisdom is a house builded and by understanding it is established." One does not do violence to the text to rewrite it in the light of present needs so as to read that not only is a house truly builded by wisdom but that it takes a lot of genuine "understanding" to re-establish that same fellowship.

We are not now considering the large-scale and world-wide problems of peace. These we shall have to face collectively. The order to "cease firing" will not in itself mean that peace has come. That was our error in 1918. No wonder that what began on November 11, 1918, was not a peace but an armistice. The winning of battle victory is but the winning of an opportunity to make and build the peace—a chance to "seek the peace and pursue it."

When we have won the war, we shall then be challenged to establish the peace. For the end of conflagration is the hour when we have to start to rebuild out of its ashes: economic problems, social problems, problems of international organizations, problems of interracial adjustments; problems that will demand the staunchest faith, the best vision, the highest integrity and the most sacrificial breadth of purpose that can be brought to bear upon them by the state, by industry, by organized science, and by the local and world-wide Church of God. Yes, these vast problems will challenge magnificent endeavor on a world scale.

TOWARD A LASTING PEACE

But this morning we are to concern ourselves about one very important and personal part of the larger problem—the adjustments and readjustments of the soldier and sailor boys themselves as they return from service in the armed forces. We must deal with it, under God.

We must deal with it by reason of its magnitude; for in due time there will have to be reincorporated in the civil life of our people over 10,000,000 of our choicest, youngest and finest men. We must deal with it because of its immediate urgency. This process of return to civilian life is already under way and will be constantly in movement. We must deal with it because the strategy of genuine helpfulness dictates that we face this, our obligation, in time. Now is the time to prepare our own lives and local institutions in moral, intellectual and spiritual resources and attitudes so we shall not fail to be wisely helpful to our homecoming men and boys.

The challenge of their homecoming demands our utmost wisdom and understanding readiness first of all in our families, our home life. Many of us look forward eagerly and happily to having things as they were before, the "status ante bellum." We picture the day when that boy we so dearly love, that man who is so missed from the family circle, will return and begin just where he left off. If we persist in this natural but mistaken anticipation, we are due for a rude awakening. And if our spirit and attitudes are controlled by this mistaken assumption, we may contribute to heartache and tragedy.

CHANGED MEN—CHANGED NEEDS

The boy who went away will not be the boy who returns. He will have changed. Some will have changed more than others; but all will be changed men. And though we may not realize it objectively, we ourselves, we who have stayed at home, will have changed during this same period. But particularly these boys will have changed because they will have passed through an abnormal experience.

Their civilian habits and patterns of life have been suspended, altered and disturbed. In place of these have been put regimented and disciplined patterns peculiar to army and navy training. No one can honestly deny that there are many values in military training: learning to live with others, to march with them, to be a surrendered and responsive unit in a great corporate effort; to come into a real appreciation of the value of punctuality and obedience to orders; to learn to do many things not because one wants to do them but because they *must* be done. All these and

many others are valuable parts of disciplined military experience. It is a great pity that we have not learned how to afford such discipline for our youth apart from the crisis of war. But, granted certain valuable disciplines and certain acquired special techniques, the fact remains that the central focus of their training has been in death and destruction. And that is neither normal nor wholesome.

Some of the best, the most productive, creative and formative years of our boys have been surrendered to the state. And great numbers of these lads will have passed through terrible, soul-searing, personality-modifying, spirit-sickening experiences of death and of that which is morbid, gross and degrading to the finer considerations of life. Some of them will return with crippled bodies. Still more of them, though not crippled, will bear physical scars. And nearly every one of them will bear spiritual, moral, psychic scars—wounds upon the unseen tissues of personality.

No, none of them and few of us will really be the same as we and they were when they marched away. And our family life, our homes, must be ready to deal with that fact with an intelligently sympathetic understanding.

A CALL TO PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING

We must be ready to be patient with their restlessness and nervousness. We must refrain from "nagging" them while they make their adjustment to the prosaic patterns of civilian life. We shall have to remember the contrast between the excitement and the adventure they have known and the prosy and sometimes dull routine of our homes and streets.

We must refrain from asking continual and searching questions about our boy's most trying ordeals. Here is a recently discharged army sergeant who writes to *Life* magazine, saying: "They ask too many questions—'Where did you lose your arm?'—'How many Japs did you kill?'—'What battles were you in?' I know they mean well; but it is very oppressive." None of these fine lads of ours wanted this war, had any great enthusiasm about killing their fellow men, or have any delight in the dirty business in which we have been compelled to engage. It is a sad and sorry business which must be brought to triumphant conclusion in order to have a world free for better things. And the man who has seen the most intimate and terrible reality of battle is in no mood to dramatize its horrors while he is trying to get his life adjusted again to something cleaner and more decent.

Our American womanhood will need, unselfishly and courageously, to make certain special adjustments. We have thousands of skilled and devoted and patriotic women who have taken over the duties of men in industry, defense work and business. Despite their new sense of freedom and the welcome experience of greater earning power, a great company of these must yield those jobs and positions to men when the war has ended. And unless they do so intelligently and helpfully they will but accentuate the social and economic stresses and strains of the postwar days.

And I am thinking also most tenderly and sympathetically of the great company of young wives—war brides. Under the tender pressure of war's uncertainty and under the real and constant biological pressure of life, they have known quick courtships, hasty marriages, brief honeymoons, heart-wrenching farewells and long absences. Their first married days were too hurried to be normal and fully constructive to adjusted companionship and spiritual understanding. When their husbands return, they will be changed men. And love must find a way to allow for these developed differences, seek a new courtship within marriage, new and even more happy second honeymoons, and a dedicated study of how to build life anew. "By wisdom is a house built and by understanding it is established." Those of us who know some of the broken homes and misunderstandings of the hurried marriages of 1917 and 1918 are praying that our young people of today may be led of God in the solution of these new problems.

NO TIME FOR PETTINESS!

Our returning veteran will challenge us with some painful criticisms of that which is petty in civilian life. And there are those petty things. On these, on many social and racial problems, that veteran boy of yours and mine will have earned the right to say some things to us that we had better heed. Many a veteran will have enjoyed an enlarged world view. He will not likely turn out to be a statesman. But he will have "been places and seen things"—Africa, India, China, Burma, Italy, France, England and the islands of the vast seas. Let us welcome his broadened horizons and encourage him to help save America from provincialism and isolationism.

Many will return with physical disabilities: some with nervous and mental disturbances, others with loss of limbs; still others will be disfigured of face. We must give them the utmost cooperation. Not pity, but quiet and sustaining understanding. They will want most just a chance to be themselves—not to be treated as invalids or as objects of overemotionalized sympathy. That is a wonderful story of the young wife who went to a hospital on the east coast to meet for the first time her veteran husband, disfigured of face. The kindly army surgeon who met her just before she entered the hospital room warned her: "My dear, how you first meet him will mean a great deal for his morale. Do not flinch when you see his face!" So that gallant and understanding girl ran in to his bed, gathered him into her arms, kissed his scars without hesitation, and to his protests cried out: "Oh, my dear, I married a man, not a face!"

Be as natural as possible. Whatever his problem, do not make him a "case." On the one hand, avoid false cheeriness. On the other hand, avoid excessive sympathy or pity. Cultivate that which any man, fighting his way against handicap, most wants and needs—simple, sincere, patient, strong understanding.

CHALLENGE TO HOME AND CHURCH

All this, you see, is going to require that our homes must be prepared to be centers of patience, prayer, un-

standing, and wholesome Christian faith and com-nionship. We had better be cultivating such Chris-n homes right now. Every means of grace, prayer, rship and fellowship with God and Christ must mobilized to that need.

If she is present this morning, I hope that one mother our parish will forgive my public mention of what ecently said to her. She is a sincere Christian woman th loved ones in service. She is doing simply mag-ficent work in a war industry, and is busy also in ner good works. She said, "You can see that often am too tired on the week end to attend church." I deavored to point out that none of us can afford to be tired that we neglect the worship of God in his nctuary. Here in God's house in our fellowship gether in prayer, in adoration of the Eternal One, breaking together the bread of life, in getting our es weekly realigned with him who is the only true iide—here we are on the supreme "production line" the most essential thing in a nation's security and fety—the inward values of the spirit. In the name the Most High and for the sake of dear ones in uni-rm, I summon every service family in this parish be in their place of worship every Sunday and at hatever cost.

But the challenge of these homecomings cannot be et by the home alone. That challenge is also a chal-nge to the church. And here in our beloved High-nd Park church we are setting ourselves, by God's race, to meet this our opportunity. Most of you are ware of the creation of a special Service Men's Com-nittee of this church. Its membership will include nembers of the legal profession, physicians, bankers, fe insurance men, real estate men, educators, psy-hiatrists and your pastor. They will be Christian nen, active churchmen. And this group will be al-ways available, night and day, to aid any service man vith his problems; not only the service men of this, ur own church, but any service man in this com-munity. This committee will seek to relate the strength and resources of the church in practical service. It will not intrude its helpfulness on any man—we all like to solve our own problems if we can. But any returning veteran who needs encouragement and guid-ance can command the church through this committee. Even while he is still in service, he can write the min-ister of this church if he is worried about a problem involving his dear ones and his home, knowing that we shall do our best to help. Moreover, the church pledges that the identity of the man and the nature of his problem will be kept confidential. We believe that this committee can be of Christian usefulness.

And if the church is to be ready for them when our boys come home, we must right now seek to set our spiritual house in order. Let us go quickly about our Father's business. Our worship services and all our group programs and activities must be brought to the highest order of sincerity and spiritual content.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE GOSPEL

Our church's emphasis on life questions must be courageous and forthright. We cannot piously repeat old formulas and expect their acceptance unless they have bases in truth and reality. We cannot smugly de-fend the status quo. Much of our former and compla-cent "status quo" is already pretty well shot and does not command the interest of men who have hazarded all for a new world. Facing them, we dare not pussy-foot on vital questions.

The drive of organized Christian faith must be toward the challenging largeness of the gospel adven-ture. Thousands of these returning veterans will re-spect the church if we rightly present the Christian enterprise without apology or timidity as to its cost in treasure and in life. We must not be afraid to chal-lenge men to sacrifice for a faith that is imperative to life and which has a cross at its heart.

When our boys return, they ought to be able to find

A Pastoral Prayer

By King D. Beach

O GOD, we know that we do not need to be taught to do evil, nor do we need encouragement o sin. We do need, however, to learn to do good, nd we do need encouragement to follow Christ. Our earts cry out for Thee, the living and loving and help-ng God, because without Thee, as we know Thee in esus Christ, we drift into careless, beastly ways which oison happiness and helpfulness and make the world, nd all that is beautiful, a shambles. Here we find Thee again and receive from Thee through our church resh supplies of forgiving and redeeming and strength-ning grace.

We pray not so much for friends as for the under-tanding, kindness and helpfulness which make for riendships. We pray not so much for material pros-perity as for courage to remain faithful and kind through difficulties. We pray not so much for health as for those habits which maintain health for ourselves and for others. We pray not for our own way, which is too often the way of selfishness and pride leading to spiritual disaster, but we pray for Thy constant guidance.

Keep clean and fresh within our minds Thy vision of a new heaven and earth, of a society on earth in which none shall hurt or be hurt by injustice, hatred or cruelty. Keep clear and fresh that vision of freedom and justice for all which guided the fathers who founded our republic. Because we can do little to stem the tides of hate and war, may we not be content to do nothing. May we as individuals and as a church demonstrate that Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Amen.

minimum expenditure of church energy and emphasis upon the trivial and irrelevant in our programs. There needs to be a great by-passing, a short cut through the "red tape of religion," and a coming to grips with its immensities. Our lads are not going to be at all enthusiastic about denominational differences and competition. No man who has been part of the all-out sacrificial unity of nations in a global war is going to be very patient about a religion which nurses five or six weak competing churches where there should be one strong, vigorous, dynamic church. And the church that can command the allegiance and service of these lads will have less concern about her mere maintenance, about saving her corporate life, than about truly losing her life in the spirit of Christ for the sake of those to whom she is called to minister. In short, when our boys come home, they will deserve and demand a church that is really on the march with a strong, living, loving and redeeming Christ whose saving gospel is for the whole man and for the whole of life!

When our boys come home! God speed the day! But God bless and discipline our homes and our church to the end that we shall not fail him, or them, as they return to open arms and loving hearts.

THE supreme question which confronts our generation today—the question to which all other problems are merely corollaries—is whether our technology can be brought under control. Is man to be the master of the destructive energies he has created, or is he to be their victim? Will this physical power which he already possesses and these new forces which are now within his grasp be employed to serve the race in constructive ways, or will they be a Frankenstein monster that will slay its own maker? In brief, has man the wisdom and the ethical and spiritual powers to control the forces which he has himself let loose?

RAYMOND B. FOSDICK.

THE New Testament lays down, in my belief, the highest attainable standard of conduct, not only for individual relationships but for national and international relationships as well. Its principles should be our inspiration and by them we should test every item of our policy.

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS.

THE highest Christian patriotism is that which keeps first the Kingdom of God in peace or war. We must defend America from Hitlerism and anti-Christian philosophies, but our supreme business as Christians is to proclaim the cross of Christ and the Sermon on the Mount.

BISHOP RALPH S. CUSHMAN.

Build Your Bridges High

A SERMON FOR CHILDREN BY VIRGIL E. FOSTER

BRIDGES have always interested me. Big bridges, little ones; wood, steel and concrete bridges; the little oriental arched bridges; the old-fashioned covered bridges; huge suspension bridges; and little foot bridges. I remember little wooden bridges across creeks in the hills, that were washed away about once each year whenever a hard rain filled the creek to overflowing.

Out in New Mexico and Arizona you see long, high, strong bridges built over what seem to be little lazy streams of water. Sometimes the river beds dry up completely, leaving the bridges standing in the midst of a desert. I saw a whirlwind blowing up a trail of dust right in the bottom of such a river bed.

These bridges are built high and strong because every now and then a terrific storm comes along and fills the dry river beds with rushing, whirling torrents of water, which would sweep away small, weak structures. Bridges in that part of the country have to be built to stand against the floods. The people build them, not for the little stream that ordinarily flows through them day after day, but big enough and strong enough for the floods and storms.

That principle for building bridges is good for building other things, too. It is good for building friendships, for example. I know folks who build small, weak friendships which last when everything goes calmly, but are swept away by the least storm of anger or jealousy. I know other people who build big friendships which stand, true and strong, under every strain.

That idea in bridge building is good also in building ideals. Some folks build pretty little ideals, which look fine until something disturbs them. When life becomes difficult and temptations are great, their ideals are swept away. Other people build fine and strong ideals, founded on courage and good sense; and they stand under all conditions.

Some boys and girls build their study habits to take care of the easy classes at school, but they creak and groan if they have to take a hard course of study. Some church loyalties are built that way: strong enough for the ordinary, easy duties, but swept away whenever the church school teacher fails to keep boys and girls sitting on the edges of their chairs with exciting stories.

Bridges have to be built big enough and strong enough for the heavy storms. Character, friendships, ideals and loyalties should be built strong, to stand true and dependable when the going is hard.

Your ministers and church school teachers invite you, at the beginning of this New Year, to the adventure of building your lives, your ideals, your friendships strong and high, like the bridges that stand safe and sound when the storms are most severe.

Sermon Outlines *from* PULPIT Readers

e Invasion of God

Text: For God so loved the world t he gave his only begotten Son. . . n 3:16.

Introduction—In the early morn- of last June 6 many of us were akened by the ringing of bells. ey told us that the soldiers of edom were storming the beach- ds of Normandy. And as the bells g there were many prayers that nt out for the sons, husbands and eethearts who probed the dark- s. Many centuries ago the bells God sounded in Bethlehem. The gelic chorus accompanied that note, d pilgrims from far listened to it d went to seek the Christ whose ning the bells signified. That was od's invasion of love—not the first, t the greatest: there was the in- sion at Eden, at Sinai, in Babylon, rough the good kings and the ophets. But here was the Great vasion of God to men.

II. *Body of Sermon*—Three things note about this invasion of love. (1) he tremendous preparation. The ld Testament tells the story of a an, then of a family, then of a osen people, then of a nation. As e looks down the annals of the ld Dispensation, one finds an ac- lerating purpose; first progress was ry slow, then gradual but sure, volutionary, revolutionary. Through- ut the story great souls looked in- ntly toward the Great Invasion to me. "Make ready the way of the ord, prepare a highway for our od." And the way was prepared. 2) Great secrecy accompanied the vasion. Only a handful knew. All ewry was guessing, and the Grecian orld was not unaware that some- ing important was on the way. The summer months were upon en, the heat of God's love was to arm their hearts as never before" -though that hopeful time was in e midst of one of the most cruel ctatorships known to history. No nger need man attempt to lift him- lf by his own bootstraps, no longer ed he heed the emptyness of mean- gless ceremony. Christ's flesh was rs, his blood ours, his sacrifice ours, s resurrection ours, and by faith s eternity ours. Out of the dim crecy came a high note of love and ace and good will. (3) There was aftermath to the Great Invasion. fants were slain, rulers distraught, ligious antagonism prevailed. The orld was thrown into a tumult, nid which came Christ's own be- ayal, mockery, death; but he looked straight ahead, forgiving, forgetting, fellowshiping. The darkness has never passed, but it diminishes as the bells of God ring through the centuries. Today the darkness seems deep, but following the dark aftermath of this great hate and murder, we Christians are assured that a better day will dawn.

III. *Conclusion*—It is the present task which is our responsibility. In the light of God's Invasion we become spiritual warriors storming the beachheads of prejudice, intolerance, intemperance, racial barriers, pride and lust. "Go ye into all the world"—free men from the darkness of sin, and show them the way into the Kingdom which was heralded that long ago day when God made his Great Invasion by sending Christ to his lost world.

(Lawrence E. Fisher, First Presbyterian Church, New Brighton, Pa.)

Sentence Sermons

Blessed is the man who can work with enthusiasm and without publicity.

Whenever the preacher talks about sin, someone is pretty apt to think he is getting personal.

Some people listen only for the things with which they can disagree.

No preacher is responsible for all the things the crowd says about him.

Some friends are most dangerous enemies.

ROY L. SMITH.

Toward Better Speech

A Free Forum for the Discussion Of Slips of Speech or Manner

Open Forum

New York: As between American ministers and Britishers, we are inferior to our cousins across the pond in our pronunciations. Our men (and others) continually say Scotch and Scotchman, Scotchwoman. In Edinburgh University those words are never used. Rather it is Scot, Scotsman, Scotswoman. There is no such country as Scotchland. Scotch applies to whisky and a certain food.

Illinois: I was once criticized for printing in my bulletin "Gloria *Patria,"* as this column did in October. Which is more correct, Gloria Patria or Gloria Patri? *Comment:* The typogremlin again. Somewhere along the line ***Patri*** picked up the "a" before it appeared here. There is only one correct form—***Patri*** (dative of the Latin ***pater,*** father). Patria means country or native land. Only in societies of the super-patriots is this form used in place of Patri.

California: The German "Wieman" is WYE-man only if Anglicized. The "be" of Bewer is like "Bay" only if the "y" is obscure like a schwa. Sorry. *Comment:* Every man is the sole authority for the pronunciation of his own name. Our authorities in these cases: Dr. Wieman and Dr. Bewer.

New Jersey: I often hear ministers say,"HAL-low-*ed* be thy name," instead of HAL-low'd. It should have two syllables except in singing.

New York: How to pronounce: 1—Cherith; I have heard this with a K-sound; also as in cheer; 2—gourd (Jonah 4:6); 3—Naaman; 4—Caiaphas; 5—Magdalene? *Comment:* 1—***KEY-rith;*** 2—***GORD*** (long "o") is preferred by the dictionaries; though the long "oo" is allowed; 3—Three syllables: ***NAY-a-man;*** 4—***KAY-yuh-fuss;*** 5—(a) ***MAG-duh-len*** or ***MAG-duh-leen,*** (b) ***MAG-duh-lee-ne.***

Proper Names

McGeachy does not rhyme with peachy; it is ***Mc-GAH-h'y*** (short "a"). Stroup (Russell C.) does not rhyme with troop; it has the "ou" as in out.

Radio Style

1. Leaders of worship on the air frequently call for the singing of "Hymn 136," while listeners, often unable to catch the first stanza (line) or later ones when it is sung, wish the minister would read the hymn's first line when he announces it. 2. Responsive readings over the radio leave the listener stranded through half the selection; therefore, many ministers are using unison readings instead. 3. What other suggestions should be made for the radio congregation besides cautioning the minister not to sing the hymns into the microphone?

AUBREY N. BROWN,
3213 Brook Road, Richmond 22, Va.

The Marks of a Minister in Town and Country

By Mark Rich

THE STANDARD set by the poet country minister, George Herbert, three hundred years ago, lifts a lofty ideal for all pastors in town and country: "The country parson is exceeding exact in his life, being holy, just, prudent, temperate, bold, grave in all ways. . . . He is sincere and upright in all his relations. . . . The country parson is in God's stead in his parish." Herbert earnestly followed after this ideal which he so completely exemplified that he is counted among the saints of the countryside. Many others belong to this fellowship. Well known are Oberlin, Kingsley and Mills but no less devoted are hundreds known only to their times and communities but all faithful servants of God and Christ. These all lived with a mission for the countryside.

Few will attain such eminence of spirit and influence as did the men mentioned above. But all pastors are stronger for setting patterns and ideals and they will be more worthy and effective for it. At the outset, we shall consider several "marks of a minister" or qualities which characterize the effective minister in town and country.

● *First, a Man of Integrity*

The minister in town and country is first of all a man of integrity. He must have "soul quality." In small places, life is so intimate that the heart of a man is soon known. If there are places where a man can deceive people, it is not in the country. The stranger may "fool the natives" and a good talker may "pull the wool over their eyes," but a man who lives among the people day in, day out, can do neither.

First of all then, the minister in town and country is sincere, honest, a man of good heart. These qualities are not substitutes for good methods of work, a discerning mind, preaching ability, aptitude for working with people, organizing powers, and all the other techniques required of a minister. But if a minister does not have basic integrity, all other gifts and graces will not compensate for the lack of this one. They will be as thin veneer on a weak framework.

He is this kind of man, not for expediency's sake, but because God's man is a man of integrity and quality. He is as sturdy as the oak tree, as clean as pure water. He is not "skimmed milk masquerading as cream." He lives with strength and steadiness. So staunch is this quality that people will put their trust and love in him. His very life is a means of counseling and his character commends the eternal verities by which he lives.

● *Concern for All His People*

A faithful country pastor has a great concern for the people of his parish. The very meaning of the word pastor implies that the parson is a shepherd of his people. He is solicitious for his flock, caring for the strong and searching for the straying.

Mark Rich

The pastor goes "from house of house, to the last cabin in the forgotten glen." Compare the pastor with other public servants. The schoolteacher, the doctor, the mayor, the lawyer and the truant officer have an interest in people. But among them all, the pastor stands out as the one more concerned, and more eager for the full-fledged growth of each person in his parish. He loves his people. He is of their families and they are his. What other office establishes such relationships? Many classical descriptions of "rural parsons" hold up this attitude of high regard for people. Chaucer in his "Canterbury Tales" makes immortal the personality of a pastor with a heart for his people:

He lived Christ's gospel truly every day,
He taught his flock and preached what Christ had said.
And even though his parish was widespread
With farms remote, and houses far asunder,
He never stopped for rain or even for thunder;
But visited each home where trouble came,
The rich or poor to him were all the same;
He always went on foot, with staff in hand;
For as their minister, he took his stand.

The beloved rural church statesman, the late Warren H. Wilson once wrote: "He [the minister] must plow with the plowman, and hunt with the hunter, and bear the burden of sorrow in a day of death."

A layman in an Indian American church, when asked to name the qualifications of a good missionary, replied, "He should be one who will eat with the people." Yes, the minister should gladly eat with the poorest of his people. A woman in Montana summed up the matter by saying that if the cattle do not come up to eat, her husband goes out to get them. That is the way it should be with the pastor.

Said a Wyoming pastor after a long trip over mud roads to meet with a group of people in worship: "When I stood up before them, the eyes of twenty-seven expecting, soul-hungry, friendly, eager people, looking into my very soul, did something to me. God was gracious to us." That is the way of a country pastor with his people. He knows their weaknesses and their faults. He understands their foibles and is not unaware of their sins. Yet, he has a great concern for them; a concern born out of respect and love and an at-homeness with them.

● *Respect for the Place of His Calling*

A true pastor has a deep respect for the place of his calling. Neither church nor pastor, nor the Kingdom of God, can thrive when the pastor does not have this attachment. All too commonly men have sought to escape the town and country pastorate. The greenest pastures, strangely enough, have been in the cities. An English rector gives us an exaggerated example of this discontent with the small field. In 1920 he wrote a book entitled *Five Years of Hell in a Country Parish*. After serving successfully in a succession of urban parishes this rector was called to the tiny parish of Rusper. He found no peace and quiet in these rustic surroundings, but slander, backbiting and

sip. Things came to such a pass he penned: "I envied the cattle ging in the fields, . . . I envied the his life in the street . . . for two rs I did not see sun, moon or s . . . even now I feel I am ıkening from an evil dream."

)f his pastoral work the rector ı: "Parish work in a country age is not a joy-ride in a Cleopatra ge made of gold and ivory, with ple sails; a long dream of fragce and song, luxury and music, :adian days and nights. On the trary, it is more like a pilgrimage penitential clothes, a penance for ds that never have been done." he amenities of village life are few. ·e misses the sweet converse with intellectual minds which are nerous in town but sparse in viles. To the man who has no reırces in himself, village life becomes stagnant pool." Fortunately, there few of his tribe.

How different and how wholesome attitude of the Rev. Calvin ınucker, for over a decade pastor a church at Titatonka, Iowa. It is d of him: "His sermons glorified rustic life; his personal interws emphasized the desirability of farm for personal satisfaction and the rearing of children; and his ıb talks and casual observations ınded the same note of rural arm."

● *At Home in the 'Blessed Community'*

A good pastor is as much at home the country as is the maple grove the hill. He is well rooted. His art is bound to his parish. He ıderstands and appreciates the oods, the temper and the values of ral life. More than that, he is the ıbodiment of the blessed community which he believes. Thoreau ished every man so much a part ıd parcel of nature that his very :rson should "thus sweetly remind ; of those parts of Nature which he ost haunts." So the country minter will portray the life of the rural ɔmmunity. His hands and face will ɔt be "lily white," for his work ıkes him into the open. He will ave the hominess of a home-loving eople, he will carry the quiet warmth f spirit born from close-knit rural :llowship; he will carry a spirit of reedom and "a fragrance" reminisent of forest, fields and orchard. He natural and complete in his going ı and out among the people of his arish.

How the country needs pastors who re neither luke-warm nor antagonisic but wholehearted in their regard or the place of their calling! Love nd respect for his community are mong the first requisites. He must elieve with all his heart in his calling nd in the place of his calling. With uch a spirit pastor and people alike are blessed. Many shortcomings will be forgiven, but not the sin of disrespect and callous disdain for his people, and for the place in which they live.

The minister in town and country has a vision and goal for his people and community. He has a holy dissatisfaction with some aspects of individual and community life. He has a goal toward which he is leading. Thus he is always living in two worlds: the community that is and the one that is to be. He is not complacent or easygoing. He is at peace with his own soul. But he is like the wise men who saw a star and followed after it. He is on his way. He not only looks forward to the coming of the Kingdom but is taking steps to bring it into fulfillment in his community.

● *God and Christ Given Pre-eminence*

George Herbert said that the country parson is in God's stead in his parish. Nevertheless, a minister is not immune to temptation and is subject to frailty. One of the first temptations to be met, and probably the last to be conquered, is to put himself first. It is easy to yield to the desire to dazzle in the limelight; to think of prestige, rank and position. This sinister temptation is described in "A Letter That Was Never Written," published in the *Canadian Churchman* many years ago. Suppose, the author asks, St. Paul had written thus:

"Dear Sir and Brother:

"Doubtless you recall the invitation you extended me to come over to Macedonia and help the people of that section. You will pardon me for saying that I am somewhat surprised that you should expect a man of my standing in the church seriously to consider a call on such meager information. There are a number of things I would like to learn before giving you my decision and I would appreciate your dropping me a line, addressing me at Troas.

"First of all, I would like to know if Macedonia is city or country work. This is important, as I have been told that once a man begins in country work it is well nigh impossible to obtain a city parish. If Macedonia embraces more than one preaching place I may as well tell you frankly that I cannot think of accepting the call. I have been through a long and expensive training: in fact, I may say with pardonable pride that I am a Sanhedrin man—the only one in the ministry today. (My training and abilities peculiarly fit me to be at my best in addressing a large assembly).

"The day is past when you may expect a man to rush into a new field sans some idea of the support he is to receive. I have worked myself up to a good position in the Galatian field, and to take a drop would be a serious matter.

"Kindly get the good Macedonian brethren together and see just what you can do in the way of support. You see, you have told me nothing beyond the implication that the place needs help. What is the social position of the leader of the Macedonian group? Is the church efficiently organized?

"I recently had a fine offer to return to Antioch at an increase of salary, and am told that I made a very favorable impression on the church at Jerusalem. If it will help the board at Macedonia you might mention these facts in Macedonia and also that some of the brethren in Judea have been heard to say that if I keep on, in a few years I may have anything in the gift of the church. I will say that I am a first-class mixer and especially strong on argumentative preaching. Solicitously yours,

PAUL
(Vacancy and Supply)"

Paul did not write that way and he did not act that way. He worked gladly where he was led to serve. That is a mark of his greatness, and it is a prime cause for the growth of the Christian church.

A faithful minister will, with Paul, experience an outgoing of his own life and an incoming of the life of Christ. Paul said, "I preach Christ" and "for me to live is Christ," and again, "It is no longer I that live but Christ liveth in me." A minister's final authority is found in God and in Christ. He is a man under divine compulsion. His work would be worth doing without this divine imperative. But with the imperative it becomes a sacred trust. In this command that comes to the minister's heart lies the difference between a purely humanistic and a spiritual ministry. Because of the spiritual impulse, a minister should have available sources of power that are not present in any work done only for humanitarian or welfare reasons. That power gives strength to endure when other sources of power have failed. It gives color, beauty, worthwhileness and meaning. Christ pre-eminent is the source of the minister's joy, his strength and his hope.

The minister will thus truly be "in God's stead to his parish." He brings the sense of God into the consciousness of his people. Through him they will understand that life itself is God-given. Each individual life, the lives of families, growing trees, animals, the inanimate world—everything is of God. Life comes to its fullness in God. The minister thus transmits to men a sense of values, of significance. Life is full of meaning. He, through Christ and God, leads the people to such a faith in life.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

FOR several years minister of First Presbyterian Church, Durham, N. C., Rev. J. H. MARION, JR., became pastor of Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Richmond, Va., four years ago. He was graduated from the Louisville Presbyterian Seminary in 1930 and later spent a year in travel and study on a seminary fellowship.

A graduate of Phillips University, Enid, Okla., Rev. L. K. BISHOP received his M.A. from Columbia University; he also pursued post-graduate study at Union Seminary, New York. Following pastoral service in Oklahoma City and Paducah, Ky., he became minister of Central Church of Christ, Des Moines, Iowa, in 1941. He is a member of the National Conference of Christians and Jews round table team, and is active in civic enterprises in Des Moines.

Dr. GEORGIA HARKNESS *is professor of applied* theology at Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill. She received her A.B. at Cornell, her Ph.D. in philosophy at Boston University, and later studied at Harvard, Yale and Union Seminary. She is an ordained minister in the Methodist Church. She was a delegate to the Oxford and Madras conferences and was advisory expert at the Amsterdam World Conference of Christian Youth. She is the author of several books and is a poet of distinction.

Since 1907 Rev. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES *has been* minister of the Community Church (originally called the Church of the Messiah), New York. He has been a director of the American Civil Liberties Union since 1917, chairman of the board since 1939; vice-president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People since 1909; president of the All World Gandhi Fellowship since 1929; and was president of the War Resisters League 1929-39, now honorary president. But these indicate only a part of his constant activity in humanitarian causes. He has written many books and is widely popular as a lecturer; he is also well known as one of the foremost hymn writers of this century.

The son of a long line of Welsh Presbyterian ministers, Rev. E. G. WILLIAMS began his own service at the Westminster-United Church in Des Moines, Iowa, in 1924. After eleven years there, he became western secretary of the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church. Early this year he returned to the active pastoral ministry and is now serving as pastor of the Highland Park Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles.

For several years Rev. VIRGIL E. FOSTER *was* associate minister at Pilgrim Congregational Church, St. Louis, and last year went to Second Church, West Newton, Mass., where he holds a similar position.

Rev. KING D. BEACH *is minister of First Methodist* Church, Jackson, Mich.

Rev. MARK RICH *is one of the secretaries of town* and country work of the American Baptist Home Missionary Society.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

CHARLES R. WATSON, pres. American University at Cairo, Egypt. "Ready for the Peace." 1 Thess. 5:8—"Let us, since we are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation." (Preached at the American Church, Cairo)

CORNELIUS H. WITT, Simpson Methodist, Long Branch, N. J. "Living Affirmatively." Heb. 11:6—"For he that cometh to God must believe that he is." (Communion sermon)

J. B. BAKER, St. Matthew's Lutheran, York, Pa. "The Best Labor Union." 1 Cor. 3:9—"We are laborers with God."

LUCIUS M. TOBIN, Providence Baptist, Atlanta, Ga. "His Light and Our Darkness." Psalm 36:9b—"Through thy light do we see light." (American)

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

Title of sermon

Text used (write out the text)

Name of minister

Name of church

Address

A. E. ACEY, Main St. Methodist, Danville, Va. "Testing Our Religion." 2 Cor. 13:5—"Try your own selves whether ye are in the faith."

JACOB T. DICK, Church of the Brethren, Windber, Pa. "Peddling or Practicing God's Gospel." 2 Cor. 2:17—"For I am no peddler of God's message, like most men, but like a man of sincerity, commissioned by God, and in his presence, in union with Christ I utter his message." (American)

HOOVER RUPERT, First Methodist, Olathe, Kan. "Highways to High Horizons." Isa. 35:8—"And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called a way of holiness."

C. VIRGIL ZIRBEL, Calvary Presbyterian, So. Pasadena, Cal. "Going His Way." Isa. 30:21—"This is the way, walk ye in it."

RALPH A. PHILBROOK, St. Luke's Church and chaplain Auburn State Prison, Auburn, N. Y. "The Soul's Radar." Psalm 119:11—"Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee."

W. HOWARD LEE, Memorial Presbyterian, St. Augustine, Fla. "You *Can* Take It With You." Matt. 6:20—"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

LAWRENCE M. HORTON, Presbyterian, Noroton, Conn. "Thank God for People!" Eph. 1:16—"I . . . cease not to give thanks for you."

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

NCE in two years the Federal Council of Churches meets in plenary session. I consider this the most important scheduled event the church life of the nation. It registers the growspirit of cooperation in our divided Protestantism, and nothing is more important for the future of the Christian church than the growth of this spirit. The eting this year was held in Pittsburgh. Over three ndred delegates were present, representing twentye denominations. The Federal Council is both an ency of action and a forum in which the churches rify their common aims. This year, many impornt questions were debated. It voted to support the mbarton Oaks plan, in principle, and referred the nsideration of amendments to the conference on a st and durable peace which meets in January at eveland. It opposed the establishment of diplomatic lations with the Vatican and declared for religious libty throughout the world. It voted against the adoption peacetime conscription now. It gave much conleration to the problem of the chaplaincy in the armed rces. It admitted the Russian Orthodox Church in merica to membership, and rejected the application the Universalist Church—an act which I personally plore. Its new president, Bishop G. Bromley Oxam, of New York, is the third Methodist bishop to old this office, and its new vice-president, Benjamin . Mays, president of Morehouse College, is the first egro to be thus honored.

Federal Council in Biennial Session

The Book of the Month

THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE WAR IN THE LIGHT OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH. *Report of the Commission of twenty-six Christian scholars appointed by the Federal Council of Churches. Available for 25 cents by addressing the Federal Council, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.*

THIS, I know, is not called a book but a brochure or a pamphlet, yet its 25,000 words would make a sizable book. In my judgment it is the most mpressive and important utterance on war which the hurch has ever produced. This is a sweeping statenent, but I make it deliberately. So far as I know, his is the first time that war has been critically and ystematically examined by Christian *faith,* that is, as a heological problem. It has, of course, been perenially examined by Christian ethics, and of course the thics was not wholly unconditioned by theology. But the ethics tended to obscure the theological background. Now, at last, war has been brought consciously into the presence of theology—over the head of ethics, if I may put it that way—and examined directly in the light of Christian faith itself. These theologians consider such aspects of the war problem as the following: The relation of God to the war; of the church to the war; of the individual Christian to the war (including the problem of pacifism); of the cross of Christ to the war; man's responsibility for the war and how this is related to the war as God's judgment; prayer in wartime; the principle of military necessity; is war inevitable? the chaplaincy; can war be called "hell"? etc., etc. Every thoughtful Christian should read this brochure and any minister who fails to read it, will, I feel sure, suffer the reproach of his professional conscience as a slacker.

A Thought for the Month

WE HAVE allowed the church to fall into disrepute. It has long been popular to criticize the church, even to demean it, to magnify its faults, to discount its importance and even to question its survival. Some years ago the word "churchianity" was coined expressive of this contempt for the church. It became popular to say, We believe in Christianity but we have no use for churchianity. I have heard even ministers say this. A chaplain writing from the front says that the men are coming home with deepened respect for Jesus but they will have nothing to do with the church. He writes this as if it were a good omen! If it is true, I think it is an ill omen. The idea that in order to get at the heart of Christianity you can bypass the church is an illusion. But too many of us have helped to foster this illusion. We have been squeamish and apologetic about the church. In theory, we have conceived it as something secondary to Christianity, pendent, but not essential to it. In practice, we have sought to build up our churches by emphasizing pleasant sociabilities and attractive entertainment. Christians should be taught to think more profoundly and seriously about the church. I affirm that there would have been no such thing as Christianity had there not been a church. I would go farther: Jesus of Nazareth would have passed into oblivion with his death had there been no church to remember him, to proclaim him and to give him a body in which to live through the ages of history. We need to recover our sense of the divine origin and nature of the church and to rid our minds of the sentimentalism which thrives on the illusion that Christianity can exist in history unembodied in a living community. The church is God's gift, as truly as Christ himself is God's gift. They exist together—the living community of believers united in Christ as its living Head.

The Church and Christianity

Charles Clayton Morrison

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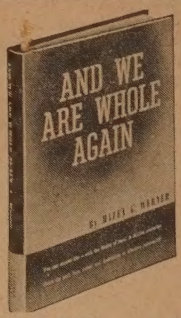

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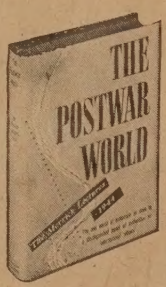

The Postwar World

Francis B. Sayre, et al

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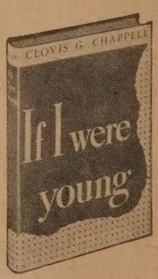

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Sermon Illustrations

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Inclusive Christianity

From the outside it looked like all the other buildings at the Relocation Centers at Rivers, Arizona—just a long, narrow, low building, somewhat the worse for the weather, where the sun shines hot and dust storms blow hard. About the only distinguishing mark was a small cross on the front of the building and a sign announcing that it was a Christian church.

Inside, the presbytery of Phoenix was meeting. It had convened in this place for a particular purpose: Clifford Nakagawa, a young American of Japanese ancestry, had been examined for licensure by the presbytery and now was to be ordained to the Presbyterian ministry.

The moderator of the meeting was Victor Manual, the moderator of the Phoenix presbytery and a Pima Indian elder of the Phoenix church. The sermon was preached by Hampton B. Hawes, moderator of the synod of California and pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles—a Negro. The other members of the presbytery, both Anglo and Mexican, joined in the laying on of hands in the ordination service. Here was a demonstration of the inclusiveness of the Christian faith.—*Andrew B. Smither, First Presbyterian Church, Kingfisher, Okla.*

'12 Million Black Voices'

The problem of the Negro, and our attitude toward him, is America's number one problem. There is naught but hypocrisy in any thought of Four Freedoms, in any idealistic concept of tomorrow's world, while we continue this indecent relationship with the greatest minority within our borders.

Richard Wright tells the story of the American Negro in his book, *12 Million Black Voices*. Because he is himself a Negro, he recognizes the feelings which remain hidden from the white man; he understands more of their hopes and fears than they dare reveal to the whites. No one knows *all* about the Negro; no one could, for he consists of 13 million souls, and rarely are any two cut from the same pattern. But Richard Wright feels more keenly and knows more surely what are the feelings of his own kind than could men who write such books as *Lanterns on the Levee*. Southern whites, who have gone to great pains to tell the Negro's story, must be held suspect when they sentimentalize about their "darkies" whom they regard so affectionately. The average southerner imagines that he, and he alone, understands the Negro, and he asks only that other sections of America let him alone work out the problem. He expects too that the Negro shall show gratitude by "keeping his place," and admitting the superiority of the white man, but he doesn't really insist on this because he knows quite well that if the world will let him alone he can manage that part well enough.—*Fred I. Cairns, First Parish in Needham (Mass.)*

A 'Bedtime Story' for Soldiers

It was midnight at an aerodrome. Some twenty-six pilots waited for word to take off for the night's operations. There was the usual noisy joking. Then a pilot took a book from his pocket and began to read aloud: "And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem, about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all things which had happened.

"And it came to pass that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. . . ."

Gradually the room stilled. The pilot finished, closed the book. "There's my 'bedtime story.' If I should come down tonight, I should like to feel those thoughts were my last."

It happened in Malaya, but the same scene often occurs wherever men face battle. That is why the chaplain has a Bible ready for every man who wants one.—*Bible Information Clipsheet.*

The Miracles of Missions

Seven American naval fliers were forced down early in the war in the South Pacific. They paddled their rafts for more than two days until they reached an island. They were greeted on the beach by a swarm of natives. The grandfathers of these natives would have pounced upon the seven strangers for a feast. But these, their descendants, greeted the fliers by handing them a book. The book was a Bible—their way of saying, "Welcome; don't be afraid of us, for we are Christians." For eighty-seven days these Christian natives tended the fliers' needs. They hid them from the Japanese patrols. Every night they gathered around their white-skinned guests and took turns reading from the Bible. They sang familiar songs and hymns that seemed like voices from heaven to the fliers. Later, when they had safely returned to the American base, these fliers made this almost startling confession: "They converted us to Christianity."—*William Janssen, First Federated Church, Peoria, Ill.*

At the Foot of the Cross

Some time ago I heard a remarkable story about an incident in the Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., an institution attended by many notables. Years ago, Charles Evans Hughes was in Washington not only as secretary of state but as a good Christian as well. When he came to be received into membership at Calvary Baptist Church there were two others who came forward at the same time, his mother and a Chinaman. As the great statesman, his mother and the anonymous Chinaman were given the right hand of fellowship, Dr. W. S. Abernethy, the pastor, said to the congregation: "At the foot of the cross, the ground is level."—*Victor Kane, Cranston St.,—Roger Williams Baptist Church, Providence, R. I.*

The Bible in the War

The American Bible Society has completed its fourth year of wartime emergency work. During this time it has distributed to the U. S. armed forces and merchant marine 4,250,8[illegible] volumes of Scripture which include 51,102 New Testaments, carefully packaged in water-proof containers and placed on lifeboats and rafts. In the Bible Society's files are many letters of gratitude from the fighting men who have found time in the foxholes, on the beaches and in their quiet quarters to read the great Book. "You are doing the type of work we all depend on from day to day, from one minute to another—the blessing and courage from God," wrote a Nisei medic from Italy. More than half a million volumes have gone to prisoners of war, refugees and civilians in distressed areas of Europe. This work required Scriptures in 16 languages. Publication in Europe has been started within the past year to meet the increasingly urgent needs and to replenish the great losses caused by the war. In Switzerland twelve editions have been prepared for immediate distribution, and in Sweden eighteen editions are being printed for distribution after the war.

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